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SONGS OF THE COWBOYS





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SONGS OF THE COWBOYS

Collected by

N. HOWARD THORP
(“Jack” Thorp)

With an introduction by

ALICE CORBIN HENDERSON



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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TO THE FOLLOWING COW-GIRLS AND PUNCHERS
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS DEDICATED

Many of you I have worked with in the past, on the range, the trail, and in the branding pens. All of you I have known well. In looking over this list I find the names of some who will never read this, as unfortunately they've answered the call. Those who are alive I heartily thank for having given me their assistance in collecting these songs. May this little book tend to recall the times, good and tough, we had together.

N. Howard ("Jack") Thorp

Miss Windsor	Jim Falls
Bronco Sue	Tom Hudspeth
Miss Jean Beaumondy	"Sally" White
Miss Belle Starr	Jack Moore
Miss Kitt Collins	Dick Wilson
Battle Axe	Tom Beasley
Jim Hagan	Doc Henderson
Frank Hayes	Shorty Liston
Sam Murray	John Caldwell
Walker Hyde	Dodge Sanford
Walt Roberts	Joel Thomas
Joe Cotton	Jim Brownfield
Al Roberts	Clabe Merchant
Tom Williamson	John Collier
Sam Jackson	Randolph Reynolds

Kearn Carice

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I WISH to acknowledge the use of songs from the following authors: James Barton Adams, Charles Badger Clark, Larry Chittenden, Alice Corbin, Austin Corcoran, J. W. Foley, Henry Herbert Knibbs, Phil Le Noir.

"A Cowboy's Prayer"; "A Border Affair," and "High-Chin Bob" are published by permission of Richard G. Badger from *Sun and Saddle Leather*, by Badger Clark; "Sky-High"; "Old Hank"; "The Little Cow-girl"; "Pecos Tom"; "Light, Stranger, 'Light"; "Women Outlaws"; "Old Paint," and "What's Become of the Punchers?" by N. Howard Thorp, were published in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, in August, 1920; and Phil LeNoir's "Ol' Dynamite" and "Down on the Ol' Bar-G" in the same number of the magazine. The cowboy version of "High-Chin Bob," by Charles Badger Clark, was published in *Poetry* in August, 1917. Henry Herbert Knibbs's "Punchin' Dough" appeared in the *Popular Magazine*.

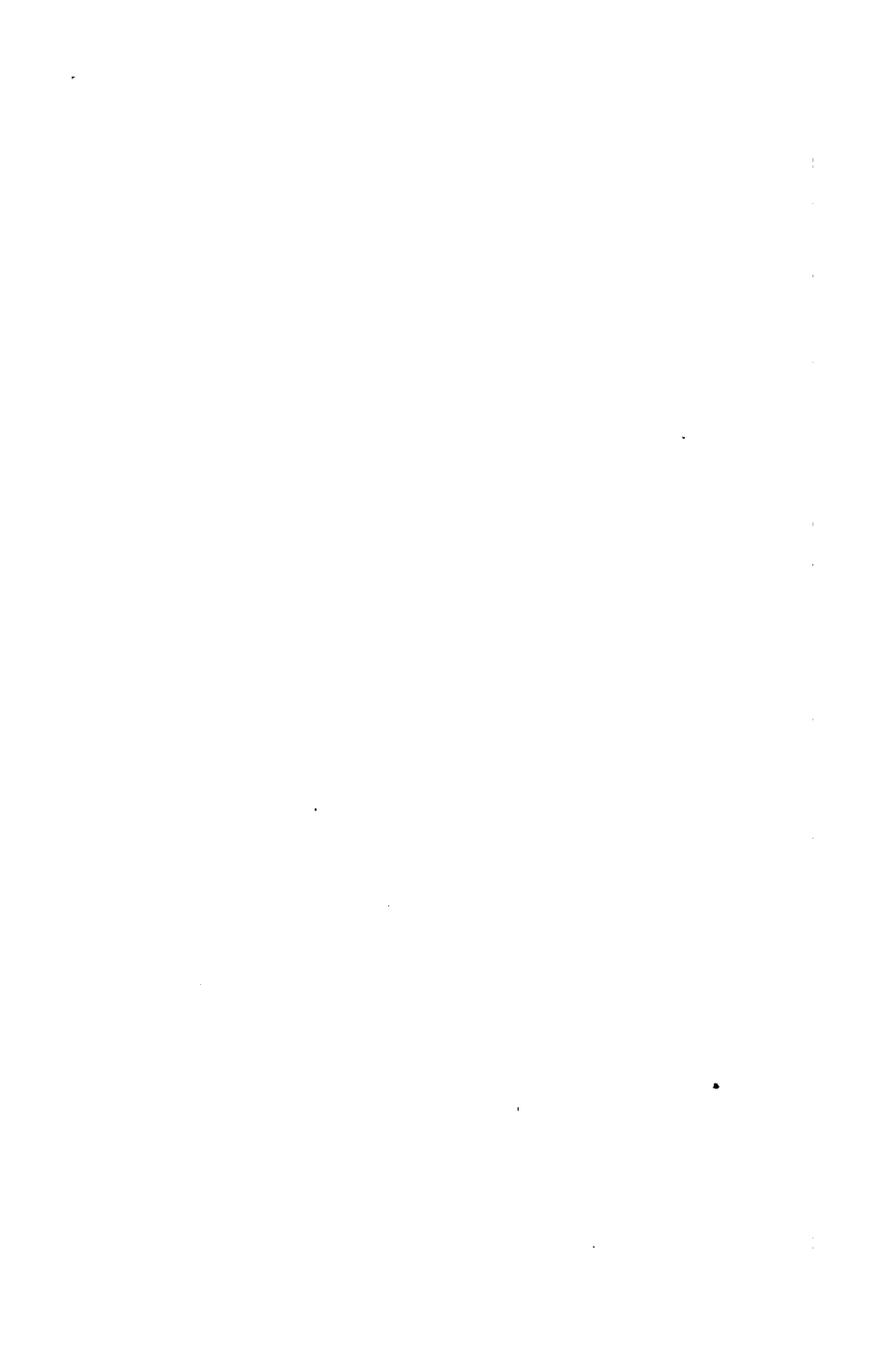
Phil LeNoir is the author of *Rhymes of the Wild and Woolly* (Phil LeNoir, Las Vegas, N.M.); Charles Badger Clark, of *Sun and Saddle Leather* and *Grass Grown Trails* (Richard G. Badger, Boston); Henry Herbert Knibbs, of *Songs of the Outlands*, *Riders of the Stars* and *Songs of the Trail* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston).

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SONGS OF THE COWBOYS

in this volume, later included in Mr. John A. Lomax's collection of *Cowboy Songs* — "Chopo," "The Pecos River Queen," "Little Joe, the Wrangler," "Whose Old Cow?" and "Speckles," this last reprinted in Mr. Lomax's book under the title of "Freckles; A Fragment," just as it came from the hands of the local printer who had lost half the copy.

The present collection is, therefore, an enlarged edition of this little volume of 1908, with much new material, not the least interesting of which are the twenty-five songs by the author.

As a cowboy poet, N. Howard Thorp — better known as "Jack Thorp" to his many friends in the Southwest — is the genuine thing. He is an old-time cattleman and cowpuncher, and his songs are the fruit of experience. His gift is instinctive and naïve, like that of all real cowboy poets, and its charm is precisely in its fresh and "unliterary" quality.

"How long have you been in this country?" I asked "Jack" Thorp one day soon after I met him. We were sitting on the well-curb in the plaza of an Indian pueblo watching a Rain-Dance.

"You see those cedars up there on the hills?" he said, looking above the roof-tops to the foothills. "Well, I planted them."

It was a typical cowboy answer, evasive and symbolic, and it indicated perfectly well that he might be regarded as part of the soil. The cowboy does n't "loosen up" until he knows you fairly well. When he does, it is usually worth while. I recall now innumerable reminiscences of "Jack" Thorp's when

he was in more expansive mood, of which I wish I could give the exact tone and flavor.

His account of the "Sooners" at the opening-up of the Indian Territory — Guthrie's first citizen: The hour set for taking up claims was twelve o'clock in the morning; but when they came upon this old man at noon he had three acres ploughed with a pair of oxen, which he claimed to have done since sunrise! His stories of the early days in Lincoln County, New Mexico — Pat Garrett unveiled (see postscript to "Billy the Kid," by which there hangs a tale). . . . Running down a bunch of stolen cattle through the Four Corners country, i.e., Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah — some of the wildest country still to be found in these States. . . . Old days in the backwoods in Texas, scene of "The Little Cow-girl," where "they may not know the national anthem, but they all know Turkey in the Straw." . . . Early times along and across the Mexican border, when "headin' west from San Antone" was a part of the regular ritual. . . . Also an experience of only a few years back, which, as it illustrates a bit of international diplomacy, may be worth telling here.

Mr. Thorp was driving some cattle from Old Mexico up to Lamy, near Santa Fe. As it happened, he was unarmed, since on the way down from Tucson, Arizona, to El Sasabe on the line, he fell in with a priest who used up all the ammunition for Thorp's six-gun shooting prairie dogs. Finding when he got to El Sasabe that he could n't get any more cartridges of the right size, Thorp tossed the gun into a drawer of the priest's secretary, and went into Mex-

ico with two other men whom he had hired on the border. Having found the herd and started back with it, these three met a company of about forty Villistas. The ragged general (nothing lower than a general in Villa's army) accosted the outfit. "Are you armed?" he asked Thorp. "Yes." "And your men?" Again Thorp said, "Yes." "Who gave you the right to carry arms in Mexico?" asked the general. "The Governor of the State of Texas," said Jack. There was a world of remembered history in that answer, and the general, in spite of his superior numbers, permitted them to pass unmolested, though eyeing the cattle hungrily. If Thorp had said, "The President of the United States," it would have been of small avail, as the Republic of Texas is still far more real to most Mexicans than is our flourishing Union, of which it is now a member.

All this is but a suggestion of the extraordinary richness of a life lived during the frontier period in the Southwest — a period that is, happily, not yet ended, although old-timers will tell you, as the old settler in the Organ Mountains said, when he found a few cattle with strange brands straying into his eighty-mile solitude, "It's gettin' too crowded here — guess I'll have to move on."

Monotonous on the surface, the cowboy's life is usually an adventurous one. When I asked Mr. Thorp for a sketch of his life, he said, "Just say that I've been everything but a telegraph operator or a preacher." (But if he has n't preached, he once gave a series of lectures on the Holy Land with stereopticon slides!)

The task of trying to give a portrait of a man of

this character is like trying to give a composite picture of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and the Indian Territory during the last thirty years. . . .

The hundred songs that make up this book are typical and genuine cowboy songs; the river and hobo and outlaw songs that are also a part of the cowboy's repertory having been omitted. A number of songs that belong more specifically to the Central States have also been omitted. Wherever possible, Mr. Thorp has given the names of the authors of the songs and, when these could not be discovered, the cowboys who sang them, or the place where he found them.

The fact that most of these songs are of known authorship, or that some of them appeared originally in print, in no way lessens their genuine folk-quality. Otherwise, many of the old English and Irish broad-sheet ballads which have come down to us through oral tradition, but were, as the term indicates, originally printed, could not be called folk-songs. (As indubitable examples of folk-songs with a printed origin and of individual authorship, one may mention the "Suwanee River" and "Old Kentucky Home" and other songs by Stephen Foster. "Auld Lang Syne" is another folk-song, which, if the identity of its celebrated author were forgotten, would be included in all the folk-lore collections.)

The more one examines the evidence, the more one is convinced that it is the use of a song, rather than its origin, which determines what is known as folk-song. Conditions favorable to the production

or preservation of folk-song are: a communal unity of interest or occupation, and a certain degree of isolation from the larger world of affairs, and from continuous contact with printed sources. These are the conditions which produced the cowboy songs — probably our largest body of native folk-songs, except, of course, the folk-songs of negro source or inspiration. (The songs of the American Indians are available only in translation.)

Cowboy songs are, generally speaking, of two types; first, songs transmitted by purely oral tradition; and, second, songs originally printed, clipped from a local newspaper or magazine, fitted to a familiar air, and so handed down from one cowboy to another, becoming genuine folk-songs in the process. During the transition a certain amount of reshaping often takes place. Verses may be added or left out, or the wording altered — these changes usually tending toward a greater simplicity and directness and a more graphic cowboy lingo. An interesting recent example of such a reshaping through oral transmission is furnished by Badger Clark's "The Glory Trail," sung among the cowboys in southern Arizona under the title of "High-Chin Bob."

The differences between the two versions may be noted by referring to the original in Mr. Clark's *Sun and Saddle Leather*. Obviously some one found the song somewhere in print, adapted it to a familiar tune, and passed it on. This is the history of a number of the songs. Again, others have been built upon well-known airs; "The Cowboy's Dream" is sung to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the

Ocean," and Jack Thorp's "Little Joe, the Wrangler" was composed to the tune of "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane."

Many of the cowboy songs, and almost all of the earlier ones, belong to the first type; they exist independent of any printed origin and have come down to us through oral tradition. They are anonymous because their authors have been forgotten, but this does not mean that they were not in the first place of individual authorship; although songs of such loose and catchy structure as "The Old Chisholm Trail," "Old Paint," or "The Deer Hunt" lend themselves easily to composite touches. Nor are all of the earlier songs without antecedents. "The Dying Cowboy" was modeled upon a sea-chantey and "The Cowboy's Lament" has been traced to a popular Irish military song of the eighteenth century — the cowboy who had the old song in his memory may well have been of that race. Indeed, the accent of many of the songs has a distinctly Celtic echo:

*There was a rich old rancher who lived in the country by;
He had a lovely daughter, on whom I cast my eye.*

But such adaptation and borrowing, far from proving the cowboy songs merely "derelicts," as Professor Gerrould called them in a recent number of the *New York Evening Post*, is a very usual process, not only with folk-poets, but with other poets as well. Burns modeled many of his poems on well-known songs and airs of the countryside, and they are not therefore merely "derelicts"; nor is Mr. Yeats's "When I am Old and Gray and Full of

Sleep" a "derelict" because Ronsard fathered it. In this connection it is interesting to see the cropping-up of an old theme, although perfectly unconsciously and with no debt to Villon, in Mr. Thorp's "What's Become of the Punchers We Rode with Long Ago?" This is a case, not of borrowing, but of the eternal recurrence of certain old themes.

To test American cowboy songs by the finest flower of English or European balladry, as is sometimes done by distinguished folk-lore students who come over here to obtain survivals of their own songs, in the Kentucky mountains and elsewhere, is of course a mistake. Cowboy ballads represent a folk-tradition still in the making — their greatest antiquity is only a little over a half century — and the European ballads are several centuries old, and have the advantage of a literary tradition even older. Indeed, this tradition is so distinctly literary in origin that, but for the oral use and transmission of the songs, one might hesitate to call them folk-songs! But to say, as Mr. Cecil Sharp does, that "The cowboy has been despoiled of his inheritance of traditional song; he has nothing behind him," is again a mistake. There are various degrees of sophistication among the cowboys, as one can see in these songs. James Russell Lowell, when he wrote the "Biglow Papers," was not thereby despoiled of his literary inheritance, nor was John Hay when he wrote "Jim Bludso," or Charles Godfrey Leland when he wrote the *Hans Breitmann Ballads*. The lack of literary associations in the cowboy songs is not necessarily an indication of a corresponding lack

of tradition or background in their composers. American cowpunchers have, indeed, been drawn from all walks in life, but the majority of them belong to that same pioneer stock which settled the East, the Middle West, the Far West, and the Southwest, in turn; the same sort of pioneer stock that produced Mark Twain and Bret Harte.

Whatever the cowboy's "inheritance of traditional song" may or may not have been (and it was that of the general American public of the period), the fact that counts is his creation of a new tradition — a tradition of which these songs are the most authentic record. What one appreciates in the survivals of the old English folk-songs is precisely the literary association, and their beautifully simple but highly evolved poetic form. But the associations of cowboy songs are directly local and immediate, and perhaps these can be appreciated fully only by those familiar with the life that has produced them.

It is quite true that the world of the cowboy songs is less imaginary than actual. It was a concrete world the cowboy lived in — he could n't escape too much into the world of the imagination. If he did, he might forget and let the old cow die bogged down, or slide to perdition from the back of the bucking bronco. His world is not, it is true, peopled with fairies or ghostly apparitions or knights in steel armor. Instead, he writes of dying long-horns, buffaloes, mule-skinners, bucking broncos, stampeding cattle, and his hard-handed companions of the trail and chuck-wagon. His armor is his own, and he celebrates it — chaps, slicker, spurs, saddle

SONGS OF THE COWBOYS

THE ARIZONA BOYS AND GIRLS

*Don't know the author. Heard it sung by Kitt Collins in
Deming, New Mexico.*

Come, all of you people, I pray you draw near,
A comical ditty I promise you'll hear.
The boys in this country they try to advance
By courting the ladies and learning to dance.

The boys in this country they try to be plain —
Those words that you hear you may hear them
again
With twice as much added on if you can.
There's many a boy who thinks he's a man.

They'll go to their parties, their whiskey they'll
take,
And out in the dark their bottles they'll break;
You'll hear one say, "There's a bottle round here;
So come around, boys, and we'll all take a share."

There is some wears shoes and some wears boots,
But there are very few that rides who don't shoot;
More than this I'll tell you what they'll do,
They'll get them a watch and a ranger hat too;

They'll go in the hall with spurs on their heel;
They'll get them a partner to dance the next reel,

Saying, "How do I look in my new brown suit.
With my pants stuffed down in the top of my boot?"

Now, I think it's quite time to leave off these
lads,

For here are some girls that's fully as bad;
They'll trim up their dresses and curl up their
hair,

And like an old owl 'fore the looking-glass stare.

The girls in the country they grin like a cat,
And with giggling and laughing don't know where
they're at;

They think they're pretty, and I tell you they're
wise,

But they could n't get married to save their two eyes.

You can tell a good girl wherever she's found;
No trimming, no laces, no nonsense around;
With a long-eared bonnet tied under her chin, —
She'll marry you if you are broke or if you have the
tin.

They'll go to church with their snuff-box in hand,
They'll give it a tap to make it look grand;
Perhaps there is another one or two
And they'll pass it around and it's "Madam, won't
you?"

Now, I think it's quite time for this ditty to end;
If there's any one here that it will offend,
If there's any one here that thinks it amiss,
Just come round and give the singer a kiss.

ARROYO AL'S COW-PONY

By J. A. Squires, Helena, Montana

I first heard this sung in a cow-camp in Guadalupe Mountains, New Mexico.

I took a trip this summer to the market,
And I struck an Eastern city where they sell you
tubs of beers;
I was feelin' pretty yowlish and I could n't say my
name,
When I wound up somehow 'nuther at a high-toned
polo game.

There were sunburned doods cavortin' on some
ponies in a lot,
And they whacked a little ball till it traveled like a
shot;
I could n't savvy, nohow, and I vowed that I was
through,
When I spied a feller ridin' on a pony that I knew.

It was that there buckskin bronco that I rode for
the Circle Bar;
He was clipped and oiled and powdered, but I knew
each old-time scar;
I had lost him when Bear Hawkins played an extra
ace and jack,
And I'd allus had a longin' fer to git that pony back.

Well, he sorter stopped and snorted when I give
an old-time "Yip!"
And he bucked until his rider hit the ground upon
his hip;

.

And he came a-runnin' to me and I jumped upon
his back,
And he pitched for sheer enjoyment when I hit his
flank a whack.

Well, I rode across the open and I stooped down of
the run,
And picked up the polo mallet (fer the player he
was done),
And I hit that ball a crack, sir, and it sailed plum
o'er the fence,
And the crowd just howled with pleasure, fer they
thought the sport immense.

Well, it cost me just six hundred fer to git my little
bronk,
And to have that player patched up from his heels to
injured conk;
But I got my old cow-pony — and jest hear this one
thing more:
Don't whisper "polo" to him or he'll buck like
Satan, shore!

THE BIBLICAL COWBOY

Sent me by Jim Hagan, of Tulsa, Oklahoma

All day long on the prairies I ride,
Not even a dog to trot by my side;
My fire I kindle with chips gathered round,
My coffee I boil without being ground.

I wash in a pool and wipe on a sack;
I carry my wardrobe all on my back;

**For want of an oven I cook bread in a pot,
And sleep on the ground for want of a cot.**

**My ceiling the sky, my floor is the grass,
My music is the lowing herds as they pass;
My books are the brooks, my sermons the stones;
My parson the wolf on his pulpit of bones.**

**And then, if cooking is not complete,
You can't blame me for wanting to eat.
But show me a man that sleeps more profound
Than the big puncher-boy stretching out on the
ground.**

**My books teach me ever consistence to prize,
My sermons that small things I should not despise;
My parson remarks from his pulpit of bones
That fortune favors those who look out for their own.**

**And then between me and love lies a gulf wide:
Some lucky fellow may call her his bride.
My friends gently hint I am coming to grief,
But men must make money and women have beef.**

**But Cupid is always a friend to the bold,
And the best of his arrows are pointed with gold.
As society bans me, so savage I dodge,
And the Masons would ball me out of their lodge.**

**If I had hair on my chin I might pass for the goat
That bore all the sins in the ages remote;
But why it is I cannot understand,
That each of the patriarchs owned a big brand.**

Abraham emigrated in search of a range,
And when water was scarce he wanted a change;
Old Isaac owned cattle in charge of Esau,
And Jacob punched cows for his father-in-law.

He started in business way down at bed rock,
And made quite a stake at handling stock;
Then David went from night-herding to using a
sling;
And winning the battle he became a great king;
Then the shepherds, while herding the sheep on a
hill,
Got a message from heaven of peace and good
will.

BILLY THE KID

or

WILLIAM H. BONNEY

By N. Howard Thorp

Down in Lincoln the native women still scare their children with the threat that Bilito will come and get them if they don't behave.

Bustin' down the canyon,
Horses on the run,
Posse just behind them,
'T was June first, seventy-one.

Saddle guns in scabbards,
Pistols on saddle bow,
The boys were ridin' for their lives —
The Kid en Alias Joe.

Thirty miles west of the Gila
They bade the posse good-bye,
For they could n't keep up with the light-
weight Kids,
Now matter how hard they'd try.

From the land of the Montezuma,
Past the hills of the Mogollons,
By night en day they made their way
Till they landed in Tombstone.

Those were frontier towns, old pardner;
'T was a game of take en give,
And the one who could draw the fastest
Was the only one who'd live.

Whiskey en women en poker,
Monte en Faro en Stud,
Just a short wild race, who'd keep the pace
Would land in a river of blood.

Fightin' en drinkin' en gamblin',
Nigger en Mex en White;
'T was a riot of sin, let the best man win;
'T was drink, when called, or fight.

En every one claimed a woman,
Though none of their claims would stand
'Gainst the Kid, who was quicker'n lightning
With a gun in either hand.

Believing that John H. Tunstall
Was the man who was in the right, {

He offered him his services
In the Lincoln County fight.

The Kid rode with Brewer's posse
Who avenged John Tunstall's loss,
Killing William Morton, en Baker
Roberts en Joe Ross.

Locked in the Dolan house in Lincoln,
Then used as a county jail,
Handcuffed en with a double guard,
Trailing a ball en chain,

He killed his guards, Bell en Olinger,
In the jail yard in daylight,
Stole the horse of the probate clerk
En on him made his flight.

Caught a-napping at last in Sumner,
In Pete Maxwell's room one night,
Not knowing he was waylaid,
Not knowing with whom to fight;

A chance shot fired by Garrett,
A chance shot that found its mark;
'T was lucky for Pat the Kid showed plain,
While Garrett was hid in the dark.

If Garrett was game, I don't know it;
He never appeared so to me;
If any of you fellows think so,
I'll refer you to Oliver Lee.

*P.S. Oliver, if you happen to see this, don't shoot through
the water-tank and drown me.*

Jack

THE BOOZER

Cut this out of a Colorado newspaper

**I'm a howler from the prairies of the West!
If you want to die with terror look at me!
I'm chain-lightning — if I ain't, may I be blessed!
I'm the snorter of the boundless prairie!**

*He's a killer and a hater!
He's the great annihilator!
He's a terror of the boundless prairie!*

**I'm the snoozer from the upper trail!
I'm the reveler in murder and in gore!
I can bust more Pullman coaches on the rail
Than any one who's worked the job before.**

*He's a snorter and a snoozer!
He's the great trunk line abuser!
He's the man who puts the sleeper on the rail!*

**I'm the double-jawed hyena from the East!
I'm the blazing bloody blizzard of the States!
I'm the celebrated slugger; I'm the Beast!
I can snatch a man bald-headed while he waits!**

*He's a double-jawed hyena!
He's the villain of the scena!
He can snatch a man bald-headed while he waits!*

A BORDER AFFAIR

By Charles Badger Clark, Jr.

Sung by Orville Cox, a Taos Cowboy

Spanish is the lovin' tongue,
Soft as music, light as spray:
'T was a girl I learnt it from,
Livin' down Sonora way.
I don't look much like a lover,
Yet I say her love words over
Often when I'm all alone —
"Mi amor, mi corazon."

Nights when she knew where I'd ride
She would listen for my spurs,
Fling the big door open wide,
Raise them laughin' eyes of hers,
And my heart would nigh stop beatin'
When I heard her tender greetin',
Whispered soft for me alone —
"Mi amor, mi corazon!"

Moonlight in the patio,
Old Señora noddin' near,
Me and Juana talkin' low
So the Madre could n't hear —
How those hours would go a-flyin'!
And too soon I'd hear her sighin'
In her little sorry tone —
"Adios, mi corazon!"

But one time I had to fly
For a foolish gamblin' fight,

And we said a swift good-bye
In that black unlucky night.
When I'd loosed her arms from clingin'
With her words the hoofs kept ringin'
As I galloped north alone —
"Adios, mi corazon!"

Never seen her since that night —
I kaint cross the Line, you know.
She was Mex, and I was white;
Like as not it's better so.
Yet I've always sort of missed her
Since that last wild night I kissed her;
Left her heart and lost my own —
"Adios, mi corazon!"

BRONC PEELER'S SONG

*Authorship unknown. First heard sung by L. Brennon,
at Indian Tanks, New Mexico.*

I've been upon the prairie,
I've been upon the plain,
I've never rid a steamboat,
Nor a double-cinched-up train.
But I've driv my eight-up to wagon
That were locked three in a row,
And that through blindin' sand-storms,
And all kinds of wind and snow.

There never was a place I've been
Had any kind of wood:
We burn the roots of bar-grass
And think it's very good.

I've never tasted home bread,
Nor cakes nor muss like that;
But I know fried dough and beef
Pulled from red-hot tallow fat.

I hate to see the wire fence
A-closin' up the range;
And all this fillin' in the trail
With people that is strange.
We fellers don't know how to plough,
Nor reap the golden grain;
But to round up steers and brand the cows
To us was allus plain.

So when this blasted country
Is all closed in with wire,
And all the top as trot grass
Is burnin' in Sol's fire,
I hope the settlers will be glad
When rain hits the land,
And all us cowdogs are in hell
With a "set" joined hand in hand.

BRONCO JACK'S THANKSGIVING

By James Barton Adams

*Heard this recited by a young lady at a Cowboys' Reunion
at Las Vegas, New Mexico, and afterwards learned the
author's name.*

'T was this time jest a year ago on this Thanks-
givin' Day,
That me an' Bronco Jack stood up, an' pa gave me
away.

An' Parson Billy spoke the words that made us
man and wife,
To run as double-header team along the trail of life.
We had a combination feast, half weddin' dinner an'
The other half Thanksgivin' an' I tell you it was
grand;
An' everybody that was there allowed the dance
jest tuk
The cake from any ranch event that they had ever
struck.

They all kep' sayin' Jack was wild, an' some allowed
that he
Was hardly fit to share the life o' sich gal as me.
But I was of a reckless turn, an' tol' 'em that I hoped
To have success in tamin' him when I had got him
roped.
There's quite a change of feelin' now, fer ever sence
the day,
We j'ined our hands an' tuk the vows to make a
double play,
He's proved as good a husban' as a woman ever got,
An' all the gals is jealous of the thorrebred I
caught.

The only thing that's rattled him was when the
Master sent
Two great big bouncin' baby twins to us: the said
event
Jest seemin' fer to break him up, him sayin', sort
o' gruff,
That one sich infant music-box he thought was
quite enough;

But now he's sort o' reconciled: I of'n hear him
talk
About 'em bein' pedigreed an' fancy blooded stock;
An' though he yit holds to it that I played it rather
bold,
I know he would n't part with one fer twice its
weight in gold.

As we was settin' here last night a-talkin' 'bout the
day,
An' all that we was thankful fer, I said, in a jokin'
way:
"Now, tell me, honest Injun, Jack, dead earnest
an' fer fair,
If you ain't filled with gratitude a-lookin' at that
pair?"
He gazed down at the sleepin' kids a-layin' side by
side,
With what I sort o' 'maged was a look o' daddy
pride.
An' said: "They're fine as silk an' I ain't makin'
any roar,
But I am mighty thankful that there was n't any
more!"

BUCKING BRONCO

By Belle Star, Indian Territory

*Written about 1878. Song has been expurgated by me.
The author was a member of a notorious gang of out-
laws, but a very big-hearted woman. I knew her well.*

My love is a rider, wild broncos he breaks,
Though he's promised to quit it, just for my sake.

He ties up one foot, the saddle puts on,
With a swing and a jump he is mounted and gone.

The first time I met him, 't was early one spring,
Riding a bronco, a high-headed thing.
He tipped me a wink as he gayly did go,
For he wished me to look at his bucking bronco.

The next time I saw him, 't was late in the fall,
Swinging the girls at Tomlinson's ball:
He laughed and he talked as we danced to and
fro, —
Promised never to ride on another bronco.

He made me some presents, among them a ring;
The return that I made him was a far better thing;
'T was a young maiden's heart, I'd have you all
know
He'd won it by riding his bucking bronco.

Now, all you young maidens, where'er you reside,
Beware of the cowboy who swings the rawhide,
He'll court you and pet you and leave you and go
In the spring up the trail on his bucking bronco.

BUCKSKIN JOE

Author unknown. First heard this recited by a medicine-vendor in Waco, Texas, on the public square.

'T was a calm and peaceful evening in a camp called
Arapahoe,
And the whiskey was a-running with a soft and
gentle flow;

The music was a-ringing in a dance-hall 'cross the
way,
And the dancers was a-swinging just as close as
they could lay.

People gathered round the tables a-betting of
their wealth,
And near by stood a stranger who had come there
for his health.
He was a peaceful stranger, though he seemed to
be unstrung;
For just before he'd left his home he'd been sep-
arated from one lung.

Near by at a table sat a man named Hankey Dean,
A tougher man than Hankey leather chaps had
never seen.
But Hankey was a gambler and he sure did hate
to lose;
And he had just parted with a sun-dried stack of
blues.

He arose from the table, on the floor his last chip
flung,
And cast his fiery glimmers on the man with just
one lung.
"No wonder I've been losing every bet I made to-
night
When a sucker and a tenderfoot was 'tween me
and the light.

"Look here, little stranger, do you know who I am?"
"Yes, and I don't care a copper-colored damn."

The dealers stopped their dealing and the players
held their breath;
For words like those to Hankey were a sudden flirt
with death.

"Listen, gentle stranger, I'll read my pedigree:
I'm known for handling tenderfeet and worser
men than thee;
The lions on the mountains I've drove them to
their lairs;
The wild-cats are my playmates and I've wrestled
grizzly bears;

"Why, the centipedes can't sorter mar my tough old
hide,
And rattlesnakes have bit me and crawled off and
died.
I'm as wild as the wildest horse that ever roamed
the range;
The moss grows on my teeth and wild blood flows
through my veins.

"I'm wild and woolly and full of fleas,
And never curried below the knees.
Now, little stranger, if you'll give me your address—
How would you like to go, by fast mail or express?"

The little stranger, who was leaning against the door,
Picked up a hand of playing cards that were scat-
tered on the floor.
Picking out the five o' spades, he pinned it to the door,
And then stepped backward some twenty steps or
more.

He pulled out his life-preserver and with a "one,
two, three, four,"

Blotted out a spot with every pistol roar;
For he had traveled with a circus, and had only quit
that day.

"I have one more left, kind sir, if you wish to call
the play."

Then Hank stepped up to the stranger, and this is
the way he spoke:

"Why, the lions in the mountains — that was
nothing but a joke;

Never mind about the extra — you are a bad shoot-
ing man,

And I'm a meek child and as harmless as a lamb."

CALIFORNIA TRAIL

By Kate Childs ("Montana Kate")

*Written about 1869. I heard it sung first on Pecos River,
at Horse Head Crossing, in 1900, by Sam Murray.*

List, all you California boys,
And open wide your ears,
For now we start across the plains
With a herd of mules and steers.
Now bear in mind, before you start,
That you'll eat jerked beef, not ham,
And antelope steak, oh, cuss the stuff!
It often proves a sham.

You cannot find a stick of wood
On all this prairie wide;
Whene'er you eat you've got to stand
Or sit on some old bull-hide.

It's fun to cook with buffalo chips
Or mesquite green as corn, —
If I'd once known what I know now
I'd have gone around Cape Horn.

The women have the hardest time
Who emigrate by land;
For when they cook out in the wind
They're sure to burn their hand.
Then they scold their husbands round,
Get mad and spill the tea, —
I'd have thanked my stars if they'd not come
out
Upon this bleak prairie.

'Most every night we put out guards
To keep the Indians off.
When night comes round some heads will ache,
And some begin to cough.
To be deprived of help at night,
You know is mighty hard,
But every night there's some one sick,
To keep from standing guard.

Then they're always talking of what they've
got,
And what they're going to do;
Some will say they're content,
For I've got as much as you.
Others will say, "I'll buy or sell,
I'm damned if I care which."
Others will say, "Boys, buy him out,
For he does n't own a stitch."

"Why, of course my Gray Buck horse
Will run on him," he said.
"Show me his track. I'll bring him back,
I'll bet, alive or dead."

Up Johnny spoke: "No brags I make;
Straight goods I give you now:
I'll put my string on anything
From a coyote to a cow."

Then up spoke Bob: "With this here job
You bet I'm going to cope;
Just you watch me if you want to see
How Texas punchers rope."

These cowboys three for modesty
Have always been well known;
For don't you know, unless they blow,
Their horns they'd not be blown?

Meanwhile the steer, devoid of fear,
Was trailing o'er the Mesa.
He sniffed the air; what did he care?
He knew he was a racer.

With firm intent on business bent
Three youth rode up the trail.
The steer he saw and dropped his jaw,
And then he whisked his tail.

The other day I chanced that way:
That steer was grinning yet.
Six weeks have passed; not yet the last
Of why that steer they did n't get.

If they once begin, for hours they'll chin,
And tell, although they hit him
And ran all day, how he got away,
And why they did n't git 'im.

CHOPO

By N. Howard Thorp

Written in Devil's River, Texas, 1901, at Jeneaw, or Juno, Lake, when in camp with Frank Wilson. This little horse I got from Antelope George at Sierra Blanca, was branded O. I rode him from Sierra Blanca to Paris, Texas. This song was in my first publication, copyrighted in 1908.

Through rocky arroyos so dark and so deep;
Down the sides of the mountains so slippery and
steep;
You've good judgment, sure-footed, wherever you
go
You're a safety conveyance, my little Chopo.

Whether single or double, or in lead of a team,
Over highways or byways or crossing a stream,
You're always in fix and willing to go
Whenever you're called on, my Chico Chopo.

You're a good roping horse; you were never jerked
down;
When tied to a steer, you will circle him around;
Let him once cross the string, and over he'll go.
You sabe the business, my cow horse Chopo.

One day on the Llano, a hail-storm began;
The herds were stampeded, the horses all ran;

The lightning it glittered, a cyclone did blow;
But you faced the sweet music, my little Chopo.

Chopo, my pony; Chopo, my pride;
Chopo, my amigo; Chopo I will ride
From Mexico's border 'cross Texas Llanos;
To the salt Pecos River I ride you, Chopo.

CHUCK-TIME ON THE ROUND-UP

By Austin Corcoran, Grand Junction, Colorado

*I first heard it sung at Monte Vista, Colorado, by Jack
Brenner.*

It was chuck-time on the round-up, and we heard
"Old Doughy" shout —

"You had better come and get this or I'll throw the
whole thing out."

So we headed for the wagon like wild stamped herd,
Fearful every minute lest the cook might keep his
word.

The way we gathered round that mess-box, scram-
blin' for tools,
Showed the disregard for ethics that is taught in
other schools;
But what we lacked in manners we made up in
friendly strife,
To see who'd get through quickest with the stuff
that prolongs life.

And "Old Doughy" stood and watched us with the
pot-hook in his hands
That he used for liftin' covers from the pots and
fryin'-pans;

And also used to carry out remarks he'd sometimes
make

To any thoughtless rider who, in fear of bein' late,
Would ride too near the pot-rack and start a lot of
dust

That would settle in his kitchen 'til "Cooke's"
rage would bust.

For "Doughy" is particular — that is all there is to
that;

But when it comes to sour-dough bread, we all
take off our hat

To him, and swear that no matter where you'd
a mind to look,

You'd never find man to equal "Old Doughy"
with the hook.

And when it comes to feedin' men — that is, so
they'll stay fed —

And spend their nights in slumber 'stead o' wres-
tlin' with the bed,

Your city chef can learn a lot from our old round-up
cook,

Who never learned a thing he knows from recipes
or book,

But just practiced on us fellows 'til he learnt all
there is to know

About this cookin' business and mixin' sour dough.

Oh! There's many ways of dinin', from what I've
read and heard,

From meals that's served in courses to a "bottle
and a bird";

But when it comes to eatin' stuff that tasted good
all the way,
I would n't quit a mess-box for a Broadway café.

For when he slides the hooks along the pot-rack,
piles on wood,
And while the fire is burnin' down starts mixin'
somethin' good,
An' you just keep a-lookin' 'til your eyes begin to
ache,
And wonder what new kind of dish "Old Doughy"
's goin' to make.
He puts in raisins, sugar, currants, and a lot of other
stuff,
'Til all at once you realize you're goin' to have
"plum duff."

Now I reckon in the cities they'd spell that word in
French,
'Til you would n't know just what they meant —
a latigo or cinch —
And you'd be none the wiser when they set it by
your plate,
Nor, after it was eaten could you swear to what
you ate?

In fact you would n't know 'til mornin' that you
had really dined
And taken in a lot of stuff your in'ards couldn't grind.
But you get the first reminder along about "last
guard,"
When that "Frenchy" stuff starts quarrelin' down
in your "front yard,"

Somethin' like the cattle that start to "millin'" in
the night,
And try to quit their bed-ground at some imaginary
fright.

But unlike the friendly "Dogies," you can't sing
this stuff to sleep,
For all the music that goes with it was furnished
while you eat.
An' perhaps it's just as well, for you could n't sing
a note
With all that sorrow in your pantry and that burnin'
in your throat
That is caused by too much vintage of celebrated
make,
Which early in the evenin' you thought so nice to take;
But later showed developments which led you to
believe
That the stuff was manufactured from a kind of
"loco weed";

Then you recall the bottles that were stored away
so nice,
With some blankets wrapped around 'em in a bucket
of cracked ice,
With their golden yellow labels like the "Dogies"
from Old Mex,
And you know it 's somethin' extra by the figures on
your checks.

But it differs from those "Dogies" that have crossed
the Rio Grande,
For you cannot tell the value by the color or the brand.

So you have to take your chances on what
"Frenchy" minds to serve,
And try to catch the bedpost as it comes around the
curve;
Then commence an awful tussle when you try to
ride the bunk,
While the "wireless" keeps you posted on the
"doin' down in front."

For you keep a-hearin' rumors of an international
riot,
Caused by the cost of higher livin' on this purely
foreign diet,
'Til you are forced to take some issue in the trouble
near at hand,
And try to organize your forces to make a final
stand
Against this food combine that has got you in its grip,
'Til you think you're in the stateroom of an ocean-
goin' ship.

That seems to take you further from the scenes you
recognize,
And you get to wonderin' how it feels when a fellow
really dies.
Still you keep on hearin' echoes of last night's food
and song,
'Til you realize it's mornin' and the "Frenchy
Revolution's" on.
Of course you may recover, and perhaps you're
none the worse,
But for me there's no "swell" eatin' while
"Frenchy" drives the hearse.

Oh! You who dine in cities, passing through plate-
glass doors,
Winding in around swell tables set on polished
marble floors,
Followin' a dorky who will show you to your seat,
While one will take your hat and another brush
your feet —
Dinin' with fair ladies while sweet music fills the
room,
And you gladly tip the "leader" for the lady's
favorite tune;

You who linger long and listen to the things you like
to hear
In the swell cafés in cities that to you are always
dear,
May think that I am partial to the "cowboy" and
his "grub,"
But I've dined at all those cafés and was fed once
at a club,
And I've come to this conclusion, and right here
I want to say,
When you eat at "Café Doughy's" you feel all
right next day,
For here is "Doughy's" record, and beat it if you
can —
He's cooked for us for twenty years and never lost
a man.

A COW-CAMP ON THE RANGE

Authorship credited to Tom Mew, Oklahoma. First heard it sung by Walker Hyde, Three Rivers, New Mexico.

Oh, the prairie dogs are barking,
And the birds are on the wing,
See the heel fly chase the heifers, boys! —
'T is a first-class sign of spring.
The elm wood is budding,
The earth is turning green;
See the pretty things of nature,
That make life a pleasant dream!

I'm just living through the winter
To enjoy the coming change,
For there is no place so homelike
As a cow-camp on the range.
The boss is smiling sum'tious,
Radiant as the setting sun;
But we know he ain't contented,
For he ain't a-cussin' none.

The cook is at the chuck-box
Whistling "Heifers in the Green,"
Making baking-powder biscuits, boys,
While the pot is biling beans.
The boys untie their bedding
And unroll it on the run,
For they are in a monstrous hurry,
For the supper's almost done.

"Chuck is ready — come en get it!"
Cried the cook's familiar voice

As he climbed the wagon wheel
To watch the cowboys all rejoice.
Then all thoughts were turned with reverence
To a plate of beef and beans,
As we grazed on beef and biscuits
Like yearnings on the range.

To the hot place with your city,
Where they herd like frightened rats
On a range so badly crowded
There ain't room to cuss a cat.
This life is not so sum'tious,
I'm not longing for a change,
But there is no place so homelike
As a cow-camp on the range.

THE COWBOY AT CHURCH

Author unknown to me, but my hat off to him, whoever he may be. Heard it recited by a young high-school girl at Montrose, Colorado.

Some time ago — two weeks or more
If I remember well —
I found myself in town, and thought
I'd knock around a spell;
When all at once I heard the bell —
I did n't know 't was Sunday,
For on the plains we scarcely know
A Sunday from a Monday —

A-calling all the people
From the highways and the hedges,
And all the reckless throng
That tread ruin's ragged edges,

To come and hear the pastor tell
Salvation's touching story,
And how the new road misses hell
And leads you straight to glory.

I started by the chapel door,
But something urged me in,
And told me not to spend God's day
In revelry and sin.
I don't go much on sentiment,
But tears came to my eyes.
It seemed just like my mother's voice
Was speaking from the skies.

I thought how often she had gone
With little Sis and me
To church when I was but a lad,
'Way back in Tennessee.
It never once occurred to me
About not being dressed
In Sunday rig; but carelessly
I went in with the rest.

You should have seen the smiles and shrugs
As I went walking in,
As though they thought my leggins
Worse than any kind of sin;
Although the honest parson,
In his vestry garb arrayed,
Was dressed the same as I was —
In the trappings of his trade.

The good man prayed for all the world
And all its motley crew,

For pagan, Hindoo, sinners, Turk,
And unbelieving Jews, —
Though the congregation doubtless thought
That the cowboy as a race
Were a kind of moral outlaw
With no good claim to grace.

Is it very strange that cowboys are
A rough and reckless crew,
When their garb forbids their doing right
As Christian people do?
That they frequent scenes of revelry
Where death is bought and sold,
Where at least they get a welcome,
Though it's prompted by their gold?

Stranger, did it ever strike you,
When the winter days are gone,
And the mortal grass is springing up
To meet the judgment sun,
And we 'tend mighty round-ups
Where, according to the Word,
The angel cowboy of the Lord
Will cut the human herd —

That a heap of stock, that's lowing now
Around the Master's pen
And feeding at his fodder stack,
Will have the brand picked then?
A brand that when the hair was long
Looked like the letter C,
Will prove to be the devil's
And the brand the letter D;

While many a long-horned puncher —
I mean just so to speak —
That has n't had the advantage
Of the range and gospel creek
Will get to crop the grasses
In the pasture of the Lord
If the letter C showed up
Beneath the devil's checker-board?

THE COWBOY AT WORK

*Heard this song sung at a cow-camp in Rocky Arroyo,
Eddy County, New Mexico.*

You may call the cowboy horned and think him
hard to tame,
You may heap vile epithets upon his head;
But to know him is to like him, notwithstanding his
hard name,
For he will divide with you his beef and bread.

If you see him on his pony as he scampers o'er the
plain,
You would think him wild and woolly to be sure;
But his heart is warm and tender when he sees a
friend in need,
Though his education is but to endure.

When the storm breaks in its fury and lightning's
vivid flash
Makes you thank the Lord for shelter and for bed,
Then it is he mounts his pony and away you see him
dash,
No protection but the hat upon his head.

Such is life upon a cow-ranch and the half was
never told;
But you never find a kinder-hearted set
Than the cattleman at home, be he either young or
old;
He's a "daisy from away back," don't forget.

When you fail to find a pony or a cow that's gone
astray,
Be that cow or pony wild or be it tame,
The cowboy, like the drummer, — and the bed-
bug, too, they say, —
Bring him to you, for he gets there just the same.

THE COWBOYS' CHRISTMAS BALL

By Larry Chittenden, of Texas

I received this song from Miss Jessie Forbes, at Eddy, New Mexico, 1898. I understand it was one of a collection of Chittenden's entitled Ranch Verse.

'Way out in Western Texas, where the Clear Fork's
waters flow,
Where the cattle are a-browsin' and the Spanish
ponies grow;
Where the Northers come a-whistlin' from beyond
the Neutral Strip;
And the prairie dogs are sneezin', as though they
had the grip;
Where the coyotes come a-howlin' round the
ranches after dark,
And the mockin' birds are singin' to the lovely
medder lark;

His rig was kinder keerless, big spurs and high-
heeled boots;

He had the reputation that comes when fellers
shoots.

His voice was like a bugle upon the mountain
height;

His feet were animated and a mighty movin' sight,
When he commenced to holler, "Now, fellers
stake your pen.

Lock horns ter all them heifers and rustle them like
men;

Saloot yer lovely critters; now swing and let 'em go;
Climb the grapevine round 'em; now all hands do-
ce-do.

You maverick, jine the round-up, jess skip the
waterfall,"

Huh, hit was gettin' active, the Cowboys' Christ-
mas Ball.

The boys was tol'able skittish, the ladies powerful
neat;

That old brass viol's music just got there with both
feet;

That wailin', frisky fiddle, I never shall forget;
And Windy kept a-singin' — I think I hear him
yet —

"Oh, yes, chase yer squirrels an cut 'em to our side;
Spur Treadwell to the center, with Cross P Char-
ley's bride;

Doc Hollis down the center, and twine the ladies'
chain;

Van Andrews, pen the fillies in big T Diamond's
train.

All pull your freight together, now swallow fork and
change;

Big Boston, lead the trail herd through little Pitch-
fork's range.

Purr round yer gentle pussies, now rope and bal-
ance all."

Huh, hit were gettin' active — the Cowboys' Christ-
mas Ball.

The dust riz fast and furious; we all jes' galloped
round,

Till the scenery got so giddy that T Bar Dick was
downed.

We buckled to our pardners and told 'em to hold
on,

Then shook our hoofs like lightnin' until the early
dawn.

Don't tell me 'bout cotillions, or germans — no,
sir-ee!

That whirl at Anson City jes' takes the cake with
me.

I'm sick of lazy shufflin's, of them I've had my
fill;

Give me a frontier break-down backed up by Windy
Bill.

McAllister ain't nowhere, when Windy leads the
show;

I've seen 'em both in harness, and so I ought ter
know.

Oh, Bill, I shan't forget yer, and I oftentimes
recall

That lively gaited sworray — the Cowboys' Christ-
mas Ball.

THE COWBOY'S DREAM

*Given me by Wait Roberts, Double Diamond Ranch,
White Mountains, 1898. Authorship ascribed to father
of Captain Roberts, of the Texas Rangers.*

Last night, as I lay on the prairie,
And looked at the stars in the sky,
I wondered if ever a cowboy
Would drift to that sweet by and by.

I hear there's to be a grand round-up
Where cowboys with others must stand,
To be cut out by the riders of judgment
Who are posted and know all the brands.

The trail to that great mystic region
Is narrow and dim, so they say;
While the one that leads down to perdition
Is posted and blazed all the way.

Whose fault is it, then, that so many
Go astray, on this wild range fail,
Who might have been rich and had plenty
Had they known of the dim, narrow trail?

I wonder if at the last day some cowboy
Unbranded and unclaimed should stand,
Would he be mavericked by those riders of judgment
Who are posted and know all the brands?

I wonder if ever a cowboy
Stood ready for that Judgment Day,
And could say to the Boss of the Riders,
"I'm ready, come, drive me away"?

For they, like the cows that are locoed,
Stampede at the sight of a hand,
Are dragged with a rope to the round-up,
Or get marked with some crooked man's brand.

And I'm scared that I'll be a stray yearling,
A maverick, unbranded on high,
And get cut in the bunch with the "rusties"
When the Boss of the Riders goes by.

For they tell of another big owner
Who's ne'er overstocked, so they say,
But who always makes room for the sinner
Who drifts from the straight, narrow way.

They say he will never forget you,
That he knows every action and look;
So for safety you'd better get branded,
Have your name in the great Tally Book.

My wish for all cowboys is this:
That we may meet at that grand final sale;
Be cut out by the riders of judgment
And shoved up the dim, narrow trail.

THE COWBOY'S LAMENT

Authorship credited to Troy Hale, Battle Creek, Nebraska. I first heard it sung in a bar-room at Wisner, Nebraska, about 1886.

As I walked out in the streets of Laredo,
As I walked out in Laredo one day,
I spied a poor cowboy wrapped up in white linen,
Wrapped up in white linen as cold as the clay.

"Oh, beat the drum slowly and play the fife lowly,
Play the Dead March as you bear me along;
Take me to the graveyard, and lay the sod over me,
For I'm a young cowboy, and I know I've done
wrong.

"I see by your outfit that you are a cowboy," —
These words he did say as I boldly stepped by —
"Come, sit beside me and hear my sad story;
I was shot in the breast and I know I must die.

"Let sixteen gamblers come handle my coffin,
Let sixteen cowboys come sing me a song,
Take me to the graveyard and lay the sod over me,
For I'm a poor cowboy, and I know I've done wrong.

"My friends and relations they live in the Nation,
They know not where their boy has gone.
He first came to Texas and hired to a ranchman,
Oh, I'm a young cowboy, and I know I've done
wrong.

"Go write a letter to my gray-haired mother,
And carry the same to my sister so dear;
But not a word shall you mention
When a crowd gathers round you my story to
hear.

"There is another more dear than a sister,
She'll bitterly weep when she hears I am gone.
There is another who will win her affections,
For I'm a young cowboy, and they say I've done
wrong.

"Go gather around you a crowd of young cowboys,
And tell them the story of this my sad fate;
Tell one and the other before they go further
To stop their wild roving before 't is too late.

"Oh, muffle your drums, then play your fifes mer-
rily;
Play the Dead March as you bear me along.
And fire your guns right over my coffin;
There goes an unfortunate boy to his home.

"It was once in the saddle I used to go dashing,
It was once in the saddle I used to be gay;
First to the dram-house, then to the card-house:
Got shot in the breast, I am dying to-day.

"Get six jolly cowboys to carry my coffin;
Get six pretty maidens to bear up my pall;
Put bunches of roses all over my coffin,
Put roses to deaden the clods as they fall.

"Then swing your rope slowly and rattle your spurs
lowly,
And give a wild whoop as you bear me along;
And in the grave throw me, and roll the sod over
me,
For I'm a young cowboy, and I know I've done
wrong.

"Go bring me a cup, a cup of cold water,
To cool my parched lips," the cowboy said;
Before I turned, the spirit had left him
And gone to its Giver — the cowboy was dead.

We beat the drum slowly and played the fife lowly,
And bitterly wept as we bore him along;
For we all loved our comrade, so brave, young, and
handsome;
We all loved our comrade, although he'd done
wrong.

THE COWBOY'S LIFE

*Heard this sung at a little round-up at Seven Lakes,
New Mexico, by a puncher named Spence.*

The bawl of a steer
To a cowboy's ear
Is music of sweetest strain;
And the yelping notes
Of the gray coyotes
To him are a glad refrain.

And his jolly songs
Speed him along
As he thinks of the little gal
With golden hair
Who is waiting there
At the bars of the home corral.

For a kingly crown
In the noisy town
His saddle he would n't change;
No life so free
As the life we see
'Way out on the Yaso range.

His eyes are bright
And his heart as light

As the smoke of his cigarette;
There's never a care
For his soul to bear,
No trouble to make him fret.

The rapid beat
Of his bronco's feet,
On the sod as he speeds along,
Keeps living time
To the ringing rhyme
Of his rollicking cowboy's song.

Hike it, cowboys,
For the range away
On the back of a bronc of steel,
With a careless flirt
Of the raw-hide quirt
And the dig of a roweled heel.

The winds may blow
And the thunder growl
Or the breeze may safely moan;
A cowboy's life
Is a royal life,
His saddle his kingly throne.

Saddle up, boys,
For the work is play
When love's in the cowboy's eyes,
When his heart is light
As the clouds of white
That swim in the summer skies.

THE COWBOY'S MEDITATION

I regret that I do not know the author's name. Have tried to locate him, but so far have failed. Heard this sung in Bluff City, Utah, by an old puncher named Carter.

At midnight, when the cattle are sleeping,
On my saddle I pillow my head,
And up at the heavens lie peeping
From out of my cold grassy bed; —
Often and often I wondered,
At night when lying alone,
If every bright star up yonder
Is a big peopled world like our own.

Are they worlds with their ranges and ranches?
Do they ring with rough-rider refrains?
Do the cowboys scrap there with Comanches
And other Red Men of the plains?
Are the hills covered over with cattle
In those mystic worlds far, far away?
Do the ranch-houses ring with the prattle
Of sweet little children at play?

At night, in the bright stars up yonder,
Do the cowboys lie down to their rest?
Do they gaze at this old world and wonder
If rough riders dash over its breast?
Do they list to the wolves in the canyons?
Do they watch the night owl in its flight,
With their horses their only companions
While guarding the herd through the night?

Sometimes, when a bright star is twinkling
Like a diamond set in the sky,

I find myself lying and thinking,
It may be God's heaven is nigh.
I wonder if there I shall meet her,
My mother whom God took away;
If in the star-heavens I'll greet her
At the round-up that's on the Last Day.

In the east the great daylight is breaking,
And into my saddle I spring;
The cattle from sleep are awaking,
The heaven-thoughts from me take wing;
The eyes of my bronco are flashing,
Impatient he pulls at the reins,
And off round the herd I go dashing,
A reckless cowboy of the plains.

A COWBOY'S PRAYER

Given me by Phil LeNoir, Secretary of the Las Vegas Round-Up. Afterwards found it in Charles Badger Clark, Jr.'s, book, "Sun and Saddle Leather."

O Lord, I ain't never lived where churches grow.
I like creation better as it stood
That day You finished it so long ago
And looked upon Your work and called it good
I know that others find You in the light
That's sifted down through tinted window-panes,
And yet I seem to feel You near to-night
In this dim, quiet starlight on the plains.

I thank You, Lord, that I am placed so well,
That You have made my freedom so complete;
That I'm no slave of whistle, clock, or bell,
Nor weak-eyed prisoner of wall and street.

Just let me live my life as I've begun
And give me work that's open to the sky;
Make me a pardner of the wind and sun
And I won't ask a life that's soft or high.

Let me be easy on the man that's down;
Let me be square and generous with all.
I'm careless, sometimes, Lord, when I'm in town,
But never let 'em say I'm mean or small!
Make me as big and open as the plains,
As honest as the horse between my knees,
Clean as the wind that blows behind the rains,
Free as the hawk that circles down the breeze.

Forgive me, Lord, if sometimes I forget.
You know about the reasons that are hid.
You understand the things that gall and fret;
Why, You know me better than my mother did!
Just keep an eye on all that's done and said,
Just right me sometimes when I turn aside,
And lead me on that long dim trail ahead
That stretches upward toward the Great Divide.

A COWBOY'S PRIZE

*Published in "Denver Post." I first heard it sung by
Al Roberts in White Oaks, New Mexico.*

Never was no gal like Mollie
In creation, I don't think!
Hotter'n a hot tamale;
Han'some ain't the word to fit 'er —
She's a beauty head to heel —
Lightnin'-built git-up-an'-gitter,
An' as true as polished steel.

Case o' love at first sight, reckon —
On my part, you understand —
An' I swore she'd soon be packin'
This same ol' cow-puncher's brand.
Went into the game an' won 'er,
From all rivals yanked the prize;
Cut 'er from the bunch an' run 'er
Off before their jealous eyes.

Now she's mine. There ain't a prouder
Rider on the ranges, see?
Mortal could n't yawp no louder
Crackin' up her worth than me.
From the crupper to the snaffle
She's a thorribred, that mare,
That I won at Johnson's raffle
At the T ranch on the Bear.

COWBOYS VICTIMIZED

By James Barton Adams

I first heard this song in El Paso, Texas, at a Stock Association meeting, sung between supper and breakfast by a man with a good voice, and long afterwards learned the author's name.

We had all made the guess by the cut of his dress
an' the tenderfoot style that he slung,
An' the way that he spun toney language that run
slick as grease from the p'int of his tongue,
That he was a red-hotter from over the water, a juke
or a markis, or wuss,
Than that in his rank, an' we thought we could bank
on havin' some fun with the cuss.

He talked with a drawl till his words seemed to fall
reluctant outen his mouth,
An' the babyish stare in his eyes you would swear
showed a brain that was stunted by drouth;
An' the boys o' the range all regarded the strange
sort o' cuss that had come there to board
For his health as a snob an' we put up a job that'd
lower the pride o' my lord.

He remarked that he could ride anything that wore
hide; he had rid with the 'ounds, don't ye
know;
An' we told him we thought we'd be able to trot out
a hoss that wa'n't fashioned for show —
One o' kittenish views that'd serve to amuse of his
highness if he was inclined
Fur to try it a whirl, an' he smiled like a girl, an'
would ride it if we did n't mind.
An' he went farther with an offer to bet all the
boodle that we could perduce,
That he'd ride anything we'd a notion to bring till
he toned it down tame as a goose.
An' in manner quite rash our available cash was
flashed fur to back up our views
That we'd find him a chunk of quick-action bronc
that'd buck him plumb outen his shoes!

We'd a mare in the herd that was reckoned a bird,
jest a bundle o' git-up-an'-git;
Half devil, half hoss, which the same is a cross
that's productive o' meanness an' grit;
She had downed every rider that dared get astride
her and crippled a dozen or so

Of the fellows who'd said that the hoss was n't
bred that could give 'em the wust of a go;
So we saddled ol' Satan, the tenderfoot waitin'
with a grin on his innercent face;
An' we got him astraddle an' sot in the saddle an'
seed everything was in place,
An' we bid him good-bye with a wink o' the eye at
each other an' anxiously stood
Holdin' onto the head o' the bronc till he said we
might let 'er go if we would.

If the heavens had fell all around that corral an'
drowned us in clouds from the skies
I kin tell you, by gad, that we would n't 'a' had any
bigger a bunch o' surprise;
Fur he sot 'in his seat in the saddle as neat as if
lollin' around in a chair,
An' that bronco, a-thumpin' the earth an' a-jumpin'
in spasms right up in the air;
Lit a cigarette right in the heat o' the fight an'
grinned at the animal's jumps,
Us guys standin' there with a paralyzed stare like
a bunch o' half-idiot chumps;
An' I'm tellin' you, boss, that he stayed with that
hoss until he got it as meek as a calf,
An' rid it around on the hoof-battered ground an'
givin' us fellers the laugh!

Every devilish bloke in the gang had gone broke
a-backin' his honest belief
That the bronco we'd picked that had never been
licked 'd sure bring the stranger to grief;
An' we bellered an' swore till our lungs was plum

sore when we learned that the schemin'
young hound
Was Bronco Bill Snyder, the champion rider,
a-huntin' a snap — which he found.

THE COWMAN'S PRAYER

Don't know the author's name. Heard it sung in a cow-camp near Fort Sumner, on the Pecos River, New Mexico.

Now, O Lord, please lend me thine ear,
The prayer of a cattleman to hear;
No doubt the prayers may seem strange,
But I want you to bless our cattle range.

Bless the round-ups year by year,
And don't forget the growing steer;
Water the lands with brooks and rills
For my cattle that roam on a thousand hills.

Prairie fires, won't you please stop?
Let thunder roll, water drop.
It frightens me to see the smoke;
Unless it's stopped, I'll go dead broke.

As you, O Lord, my herd behold,
It represents a sack of gold;
I think at least five cents a pound
Will be the price of beef the year round.

One thing more and then I'm through, —
Instead of one calf, give my cows two.
I may pray different from other men,
But I've had my say, and now, Amen.

THE CROOKED TRAIL TO HOLBROOK

*Mailed me from Douglas, Arizona, by an old friend
named Cotton.*

Come, all you jolly cowboys that follow the bronco
steer,
I'll sing to you a verse or two your spirits for to
cheer;
It's all about a trip that I did undergo
On that crooked trail to Holbrook, in Arizona, oh.

It was on the seventeenth of February our herd
it started out,
It would have made your hearts jump to hear them
bawl and shout,
As wild as any buffalo that ever swam the Platte,
Those cattle we were driving and every one was
fat.

We crossed the Mescal Mountains on the way to
Hidalgo,
And when we got to Gilson Flats, Lord, how the
wind did blow!
But our spirits never failed us as onward we did go,—
On that crooked trail to Holbrook, in Arizona, oh.

That night we had a stampede; Lord, how the cattle
run!
We made it to our horses; I tell you, we had fun;
Over the prickly pear and catclaw brush we quickly
made our way;
We thought of our long journey and the girls we'd
left one day.

It's long by Sombserva we slowly punched along,
While each and every puncher would sing a hearty
song

To cheer up his comrade as onward we did go, —
On that crooked trail to Holbrook, in Arizona, oh.

We crossed the Mogollon Mountains where the tall
pines grow,

Grass in abundance and rippling streams do flow;
Our packs were always turning, of course our gait
was slow, —

On that crooked trail of Holbrook, in Arizona, oh.

At last we got to Holbrook — a little gale did blow;
It blew up sand and pebble stones, and it did n't
blow them slow.

We had to drink the water from that muddy little
stream,

And swallowed a peck of dirt when we tried to eat
a bean.

But the cattle now are shipped and homeward we
are bound

With a lot of as tired horses as ever could be
found,

Across the reservation no danger did we fear,
But thought of wives and sweethearts and the ones
we love so dear.

CROSSING THE DIVIDE

By J. W. Foley

One of the best of the lot. Heard this at a round-up in the Mogollon Mountains, sung by a puncher named Freckles.

Parson, I'm a maverick, just runnin' loose an'
grazin',

Eatin' where's th' greenest grass an' drinkin' where
I choose;

Had to rustle in my youth an' never had no raisin';
Was n't never halter broke an' I ain't much to lose;
Used to sleepin' in a bag an' livin' in a slicker;
Church folks never branded me — I don't know as
they tried;

Wish you'd say a prayer for me an' try to make a
dicker

For the best they'll give me when I cross the Big
Divide.

Tell 'em I ain't corralled a night in more'n twenty;
Tell 'em I'm rawboned an' rough an' ain't much for
looks;

Tell 'em I don't need much grief because I've had
a-plenty;

I don't know how bad I am 'cause I ain't kept no
books.

Tell 'em I'm a maverick a-runnin' loose unbranded;
Tell 'em I shoot straight an' quick an' ain't got much
to hide;

Have 'em come an' size me up as soon as I get
landed,

For the best they'll give me when I cross the Great
Divide.

Tell 'em I rode straight an' square an' never grabbed
for leather;
Never roped a crippled steer or rode a sore-backed
horse;
Tell 'em I've bucked wind an' rain an' every sort
of weather,
Had my tilts with A. K. Hall an' Captain R. E.
Morse.
Don't hide nothin' from 'em, whether it be sweet
or bitter,
Tell 'em I'll stay on th' range, but if I'm shut
outside
I'll abide it like a man because I ain't no
quitter;
I ain't going to change just when I cross th' Big
Divide.

Tell 'em, when th' Roundup comes for all us human
critters,
Just corral me with my kind an' run a brand on
me;
I don't want to be corralled with hypocrites an'
quitters;
Brand me just for what I am — an' I'm just what
you see.
I don't want no steam-het stall or bran-mash for
my ration;
I just want to meet th' boss an' face him honest-
eyed,
Show him just what chips I got an' shove 'em in for
cashin';
That's what you can tell 'em when I cross the Big
Divide.

DAN TAYLOR

Authorship credited to Len Doran, Mineral Wells, Texas. I first heard it sung by Tom Williamson, while carrying a bunch of horses from Monument Springs over to Midland, Texas.

Dan Taylor is a rollicking cuss,
A frisky son of a gun;
He loves to court the maidens,
And he savvies how it's done.

He used to be a cowboy,
And they say he was n't slow;
He could ride the bucking bronco
And swing the long lasso.

He could catch a maverick by the head
Or heel him on the fly;
He could pick up his front ones
Whenever he chose to try.

He used to ride 'most anything;
Now he seldom will.
He says they cut some caper in the air
Of which he's got his fill.

He is done and quit the business,
Settled down to quiet life,
And he's hunting for some maiden
Who will be his wife, —

One who will wash and patch his britches
And feed the setting hen,
Milk old Blue and Brindy,
And tend to baby Ben.

Then he'll build a cozy cottage
And furnish it complete,
He'll decorate the walls inside
With pictures new and sweet.

He will leave off riding broncos
And be a different man;
He will do his best to please his wife
In every way he can.

Then together in double harness
They will trot along down the line,
Until death shall call them over
To a bright and sunny clime.

May your joys be then completed
And your sorrows have an end,
Is the fondest wish of the writer, —
Your true and faithful friend.

A DEER HUNT

There are several versions of this song. Everybody adds a new verse. The author of this no one knows, as the original song has been so changed by additions of verses that there is little of it left.

One pleasant summer day it came a storm of snow;
I picked my old gun and a-hunting I did go.

I came across a herd of deer and I trailed them
through the snow;
I trailed them to the mountains where straight up
they did go.

I trailed them o'er the mountains, I trailed them to
the brim,
And trailed them to the waters where they jumped
in to swim.

I cocked both my pistols and under water went, —
To kill the fattest of them deer, that was my whole
intent.

While I was under water five hundred feet or more,
I fired both my pistols —like cannons did they roar.

I picked up my venison and out of water came, —
To kill the balance of them deer I thought it was my
aim.

So I bent my gun in circles and fired round a hill,
And out of three or four deer ten thousand I did kill.

Then I picked up my venison and on my back I tied,
And as the sun came passing by I hopped up there
to ride.

The sun she carried me o'er the globe; so merrily
I did roam
That in four and twenty hours I landed safe at
home.

And the money I received for my venison and skin,
I taken it all to the barn door and it would not all go in.

And if you doubt the truth of this I tell you how to
know:
Just take my trail and go my rounds as I did long
ago.

And if you get there before I do, and in case you do
not find me,
I'll just back trail for a year or two, for the gal I left
behind me.

DOWN ON THE OL' BAR-G

By Phil LeNoir

The boss he took a trip to France,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.
He left his gal to run the ranch,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.
She would n't let us chew nor cuss,
Had to keep slicked up like a city bus,
So round-up time was u-nan-i-mous,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.

Our round-up cook he soon got th'u,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.
Found his clay pipe right in the stew,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.
But when we let that feller go
We married grief an' we married woe,
For the gal opined she'd bake the dough,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.

Wisht you'd seen her openin' meal
Down on the ol' Bar-G.
We all blinked twict — seemed plumb unreal,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.
We had figs an' fudge an' whipped-up pru-in
An' angel-cake all dipped in goo-in,
"My Gawd," said Tex, "my stomick 's ruin'"
Down on the ol' Bar-G.

We quit that job an' cook-la-dee,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.
An' pulled our freight for the lone prair-ee,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.
For out on the range we could chew an' cuss
An' git real mean an' bois-ter-uss,
Whar apron-strings they could n't rope us,
Down on the ol' Bar-G.

THE DREARY, DREARY LIFE

*An old song, a jumble of several. Authorship unknown.
I first heard it at Kingston, New Mexico, sung by a man
named Sam Jackson.*

A cowboy's life is a dreary, dreary life,
Some say it's free from care;
Rounding up the cattle from morning till night
On the bald prairie so bare.

Just about four o'clock old cook will holler out,
"Roll out, boys, it's almost day."
Through his broken slumbers the puncher he will ask,
Has the short summer night passed away?

The cowboy's life is a dreary, dreary life,
He's driven through the heat and cold;
While the rich man's a-sleeping on his velvet couch,
Dreaming of his silver and gold.

When the spring work sets in, then our troubles
will begin,
The weather being fierce and cold;
We're almost froze, with the water on our clothes,
And the cattle we can scarcely hold.

The cowboy's life is a dreary, weary one,
He works all day to the setting of the sun;
And then his day's work is not done,
For there's his night guard to go on.

"Saddle up! Saddle up!" the boss will holler out,
When camped down by the Pecos Stream,
Where the wolves and owls with their terrifying howls
Will disturb us in our midnight dream.

You are speaking of your farms, you are speaking of
your charms,
You are speaking of your silver and gold;
But a cowboy's life is a dreary, dreary life,
He's driven through the heat and cold.

Once I loved to roam, but now I stay at home:
All you punchers take my advice;
Sell your bridle and your saddle, quit your roaming
and your travels,
And tie on to a cross-eyed wife.

THE DYING COWBOY

Authorship credited to H. Clemons, Deadwood, Dakota, 1872. I first heard it from Kearn Carico, at Norfolk, Nebraska, in 1886.

"Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie";
Those words came slow and mournfully
From the pallid lips of a youth that lay
On his dying couch at the close of day.

He had wasted and pined till o'er his brow
Death's shadows fast were drawing now;
He had thought of home and the loved ones nigh,
As the cowboys gathered to see him die.

How oft have I listened to those well-known words,
The wild wind and the sound of birds;
He had thought of home and the cottonwood boughs,
Of the scenes that he loved in his childhood hours.

"I have always wished to be laid, when I died,
In the old churchyard on the green hillside,
By the grave of my father, oh, let my grave be;
Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie.

"I wish to be laid where a mother's care
And a sister's tear can mingle there;
Where friends can come and weep o'er me;
Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie.

"Oh, bury me not —" and his voice failed there;
They paid no heed to his dying prayer;
In a narrow grave just six by three,
They laid him there on the lone prairie.

Where the dewdrops fall and the butterfly rests,
The wild rose blooms on the prairie's crest,
Where the coyotes howl and the wind sports free,
They laid him there on the lone prairie.

THE END OF THE YAQUI TRAIL

By N. Howard Thorp

*Written while near Altar, in State of Sonora, old Mexico,
south of El Sarsabi, receiving a herd of steers for Allen
& Robinson, of the Lamy Grant, near Santa Fé, 1914.*

Living long lives in Sonora, nested 'mongst moun-
tains high,
In close commune with the eagles that soar the
Southern sky;

Living by hunting and fishing, raising their Indian
corn,
High in the Sierra Madres, 't was there the Yaquis
were born.

Loud in their childish prattle, playing with sticks
and stones;
Each one a future warrior born to defend their
homes;
Sons of Spartan mothers, reared in those mountains
high,
Satisfied with a peaceful life just as you or I.

Crooning to their papooses just like your mam-
mie or mine,
Squaws of a hardy nation, stoics and last of their
line;
With every man's hand against them, driven from
crag to fen,
God in His mercy defend them, for still they are
mothers of men.

From the days of Don Velasquez, Alvarado, and
Hernan Cortez,
Victoria Pednaza, Santana, and Porfirio Diaz,
They've driven them into slavery through Jalisco
to Michoacan,
Through Guerrero Oaxaca Campeche to the jute-
fields of Yucatan.

Save them till Montezuma, God of the Indian race,
Who, according to ancient tradition, shall some
day come out of the East,

And call all the braves and warriors above and beneath the sod
To rally around his standard and pay homage to their God.

THE FATE OF THE BEEF STEER

By J. W. Foley

Heard this sung at a cow-camp at Solidad Ranch, New Mexico.

Hush-a-by, Long Horn, your pards are all sleepin';
Stop your durn millin' an' tossin' your head,
Wavin' your horns so unrestful, an' sweepin'
All of the beef herd with eyes big an' red.
Mebbe you know when you're pawin' the dust up,
Bellerin' ugly an' switchin' your tail;
Mebbe you know when you are nearin' the bust-up,
Nearin' the quittin' place — end of the trail.

Say, it's a queer trail that you've got to foller,
Scattered all over the face of the land,
All of you made into goods but the holler,
Part of you bottled an' part of you canned.
Wait till they're through with you till you knock
under;
You've got so ticklish a journey to go.
All of the round-ups between here an' thunder
Could n't locate you, they'll scatter you so.

You think we crowd you — you'll have to go faster;
You ain't all steak — you'll discover that, too;
Wait till they put your red hair into plaster,
Boil down your hoofs into Stickum's Best Glue;

You'll see the Matachines in a dance that's all their
own;
The wild Comanches on horseback as they storm
a native home.
You'll find there's no restrictions on what you have
to do,
En scenes change like the seasons, each day brings
something new.
Wear old clothes, hunt, fish, en idle; do exactly as
you please,
Forget set rules en schedules — with a good horse
between your knees.

FRIJOLE BEANSES

By N. Howard Thorp

1919

I've cooked you in the strongest gypsum water;
I've boiled you up in water made of snow;
I've eaten you above the Arctic Circle,
I've chewed on you in southern Mexico.
In the camp-fire, on the stove, or in the oven,
Or buried in the ashes overnight,
You've saved my life on more than one occasion —
Oh, frijole bean, you're simply out of sight.

Of course you know, as far as one's digestion
Is concerned, you'd ever break it plumb in two
Without a single moment's hesitation —
Least that's the reputation given you.
Well here's to your health, you little brown frijole,
Your health I'll pledge and by you always stand;
You're eaten by the rich and by the lowly,
You're an outlawed product of our Western land.

Oh, little bean about you's such a savor,
Such a muchness, such a taste that you have got;
A particularly satisfying flavor
When we've added sow and chile to the pot.
Then good-bye, my little pard, I hate to leave you,
You've been with me on many a long hike;
So I'll eat the last of you that is in the skillet,
Then saddle up old buck and hit the pike.

THE GAL I LEFT BEHIND ME

*This song is so old that all the descendants of the author,
"I understand," have died of old age. I believe it was the
first cow song I ever heard.*

I struck the trail in seventy-nine,
The herd strung out behind me;
As I jogged along my mind ran back
For the gal I left behind me.
That sweet little gal, that true little gal,
The gal I left behind me!

If ever I get off the trail
And the Indians they don't find me,
I'll make my way straight back again
To the gal I left behind me.
That sweet little gal, that true little gal,
The gal I left behind me!

The wind did blow, the rain did flow,
The hail did fall and blind me;
I thought of that gal, that sweet little gal,
That gal I'd left behind me!
That sweet little gal, that true little gal,
The gal I left behind me!

She wrote ahead to the place I said,
I was always glad to find it;
She says, "I am true; when you get through,
Ride back and you will find me."
That sweet little gal, that true little gal,
The gal I left behind me!

When we sold out, I took the train,
I knew where I would find her;
When I got back we had a smack,
And that was no gol-darned liar.
That sweet little gal, that true little gal,
The gal I left behind me!

GET ALONG, LITTLE DOGIES

Heard this song sung in Tombstone, Arizona, by Jim Falls.

As I walked out one morning for pleasure,
I spied a cow-puncher all riding alone;
His hat thrown back and his spurs was a-jinglin'
As he approached me a-singin' this song:

Whoopee ti yi yo, git along, little dogies,
It's your misfortune, and none of my own.
Whoopee ti yi yo, git along, little dogies,
For you know Wyoming will be your new home.

Early in the spring we round up the dogies,
Mark and brand and bob off their tails;
Round up our horses, load up the chuck-wagon,
Then throw the dogies upon the North trail.

It's whoopin' and yellin' and drivin' the dogies;
Oh, how I wish you would go on;
It's whoopin' and punchin', go on, little dogies,
For you know Wyoming will be your new home.

Some boys go up the trail for pleasure,
But that's where you get it most awfully wrong;
For you have n't an idea the trouble they give us
While we go drivin' them all along.

Your mother she was raised 'way down in Texas,
Where the jimson weed and sand-burrs grow;
Now we'll fill you up on prickly pear and cholla,
Till you are ready for the trail to Idaho.

Oh, you'll be soup for Uncle Sam's Injuns;
"It's beef, heap beef," I hear them cry.
Git along, git along, little dogies,
You're goin' to be beef steers by and by.

THE GOL-DARNED WHEEL

*Mailed me by a friend from Marfa, Texas, who heard it
sung by a cow-puncher named Hudspeth.*

I can take the wildest bronco in the tough old woolly
West;
I can ride him, I can break him, let him do his level
best;
I can handle any cattle who ever wore a coat of hair,
And I've had a lively russle with a tarnal grizzly
bear;
I can rope and throw the longhorn of the wildest
Texas brand,
And in Indian disagreements I can play a leading
hand;

But at last I got my master, and he surely made me
squeal,
When the boys got me a-straddle of that gol-darned
wheel.

It was at the Eagle Ranch on the Brazos,
When I first found that darned contrivance that
upset me in the dust.
A tenderfoot had brought it; he was wheeling all
the way
From the sunrise end of freedom out to San Fran-
cisco Bay.
He tied up at the ranch for to get outside a meal,
Never thinkin' we would monkey with his gol-
darned wheel.

Arizona Jim begun it when he said to Jack McGill,
There was fellows forced to limit braggin' on their
ridin' skill;
And he'd venture the admission the same fellow
that he meant
Was a very handy critter far as ridin' broncos went;
But he would find that he was buckin' 'gainst a dif-
ferent kind of deal
If he threw his leather leggins 'gainst a gol-darned
wheel.

Such a slam against my talent made me hotter than
a mink,
And I swore that I would ride him for amusement or
for chink.
And it was nothin' but a plaything for the kids and
such about,

And they'd have their ideas shattered if they'd lead
the critter out.

They held it while I mounted and gave the word
to go;

The shove they gave to start me warn't unreason-
ably slow.

But I never spilled a cuss-word and I never spilled
a squeal —

I was buildin' reputation on that gol-darned wheel.

Holy Moses and the Prophets how we split the
Texas air,

And the wind it made whip-crackers of my same old
canthy hair,

And sorta comprehended as down the hill we went
There was bound to be a smash-up that I could n't
well prevent.

Oh, how them punchers bawled, "Stay with her,
Uncle Bill!

Stick your spurs in her, you sucker, turn her muzzle
up the hill!"

But I never made an answer; I just let the cusses
squeal,

I was buildin' reputation on that gol-darned wheel.

The grade was mighty slopin' from the ranch down
to the creek,

And I went a-galliflutin' like a crazy lightnin'
streak —

Went whizzin' and a-dartin' first this way and then
that,

The darned contrivance sort o' wobbling like the
flyin' of a bat.

I pulled upon the handles, but I could n't check it up,
And I yanked and sawed and hollowed, but the
darned thing would n't stop.
Then a sort of a thinker in my brain began to steal,
That the devil held a mortgage on that gol-darned
wheel.

I've sort o' dim and hazy remembrance of the stop,
With the world a-goin' round and the stars all
tangled up;
Then there came an intermission that lasted till I
found
I was lyin' at the ranch with the boys all gathered
round,
And a doctor was sewin' on the skin where it was
ripped,
And old Arizona whispered, "Well, old boy, I guess
you're whipped."
And I told him I was busted from sombrero down
to heel,
And he grinned and said, "You ought to see that
gol-darned wheel."

GREASER JOE'S PLACE

From the "Denver Republican."

You kin brag of city caffeys and their trout from
streams and lakes.
Of their meals served a la carty and their mush-
rooms and their steaks;
But the grub at Greaser Joe's is the finest ever dealt:
Come, hambrey, and jest tuck a bowl of chile
'neath your belt!

The music's kind o' skimpin' and it don't go very far;
It's dealt out by a half-breed and a mighty bad
guitar;
But old Joe is a winner when it comes to mixin' dope,
And the first smell of his chile 'd give a dyin' hoss-
thief hope.

There is sometimes rough stunts doin' and p'r'aps
some powder burnt,
For the men who eat at Joe's all the p'litest ways
ain't learnt;
But good food is like to most things that are scarce
and hard to get —
It's worth some risk in trallin' and a-makin' yours,
you bet!

So jest come with me to Joe's where there ain't no
menu stunt,
Where the tablecloths is minus and a napkin's
an affront,
And you'll get a bowl of chile that'll warm you
through and through,
So come with me to Jose's, you tenderfoot — yes,
you!

THE GREAT ROUND-UP

I first heard this song sung by Sally White, at Toya, Texas, in 1909, although a slightly different version was published in my first edition of "Songs of the Cowboys."

When I think of the last great round-up,
On the eve of eternity's dawn,
I think of the past of the cowboys
Who have been with us here and are gone.

And I wonder if any will greet me
On the sands of the evergreen shore
With a hearty, "God bless you, old fellow,"
That I've met with so often before.

I think of the big-hearted fellows
Who will divide with you, blanket and bread,
With a piece of stray beef well roasted,
And charge for it never a red.
I often look upward and wonder
If the green fields will seem half so fair,
If any the wrong trail have taken
And fail to "be in" over there.

For the trail that leads down to perdition
Is paved all the way with good deeds,
But in the great round-up of ages,
Dear boys, this won't answer your needs.
But the way to the green pastures, though narrow,
Leads straight to the home in the sky,
And Jesus will give you the passports
To the land of the sweet by and by.

For the Saviour has taken the contract
To deliver all those who believe,
At the headquarters ranch of His Father,
In the great range where none can deceive.
The Inspector will stand at the gateway
And the herd, one by one, will go by, —
The round-up by the angels in judgment
Must pass 'neath His all-seeing eye.

No maverick or slick will be tallied
In the great book of life in his home,
For he knows all the brands and the earmarks
That down through the ages have come.

But along with the tailings and sleepers
The strays must turn from the gate;
No road brand to gain them admission,
But the awful sad cry of "too late."

Yet I trust, in the last great round-up,
When the rider shall cut the big herd,
That the cowboys shall be represented
In the earmark and brand of the Lord;
To be shipped to the bright mystic regions
Over there in green pastures to lie,
And led by the crystal still waters,
In that home of the sweet by and by.

HELL IN TEXAS

This song was originally entitled "The Birth of New Mexico." I have five different versions of it. As each version is supposed to be by a different author, and I can only procure the names of three of them, I shall brand it as a "maverick" and let it go at that.

The Devil we're told in hell was chained,
And a thousand years he there remained;
He never complained nor did he groan,
But determined to start a hell of his own,
Where he could torment the souls of men
Without being chained in a prison pen.
So he asked the Lord if he had on hand.
Anything left when he made the land.

The Lord said, "Yes, I had plenty on hand
But I left it down on the Rio Grande;
The fact is, old boy, the stuff is so poor
I don't think you could use it in hell any more."

But the Devil went down to look at the truck,
And said if it came as a gift he was stuck;
For after examining it carefully and well,
He concluded the place was too dry for hell.

So in order to get it off his hands,
The Lord promised the Devil to water the lands;
For he had some water, or rather some dregs,
A regular cathartic that smelled like bad eggs.
Hence the deal was closed and the deed was given,
And the Lord went back to his home in heaven.
And the Devil then said, "I have all that is needed
To make a good hell," and hence he succeeded.

He began to put thorns in all of the trees,
And mixed up the sand with millions of fleas;
And scattered tarantulas along all the roads;
Put thorns on the cactus and horns on the toads.
He lengthened the horns of the Texas steers,
And put an addition on the rabbit's ears;
He put a little devil in the bronco steed,
And poisoned the feet of the centipede.

The rattlesnake bites you, the scorpion stings,
The mosquito delights you with buzzing wings;
The sand-burrs prevail, and so do the ants,
And those who sit down need half-soles on their
pants.

The Devil then said that throughout the land
He'd managed to keep up the Devil's own brand,
And all would be mavericks unless they bore
The marks of scratches and bites and thorns by the
score.

The heat in the summer is a hundred and ten,
Too hot for the Devil and too hot for men;
The wild boar roams through the black chaparral, —
It's a hell of a place he has for a hell!
The red pepper grows on the banks of the brooks;
The Mexicans use it in all that they cook.
Just dine with a Greaser, and then you will shout,
"I've hell on the inside as well as the out."

THE HELL-BOUND TRAIN

*Heard this sung at a cow-camp near Pontoon Crossing,
on the Pecos River, by a puncher named Jack Moore.*

A Texas cowboy lay down on a barroom floor,
Having drunk so much he could drink no more;
So he fell asleep with a troubled brain
To dream that he rode on a hell-bound train.

The engine with murderous blood was damp,
And was brilliantly lit with a brimstone lamp;
An imp for fuel was shoveling bones,
While the furnace rang with a thousand groans.

The boiler was filled with lager beer,
And the Devil himself was the engineer;
The passengers were a most motley crew, —
Church member, atheist, Gentile, and Jew;

Rich men in broadcloth, beggars in rags;
Handsome young ladies, withered old hags;
Yellow and black men, red, brown, and white,
All chained together, — O God, what a sight!

While the train rushed on at an awful pace,
The sulphurous fumes scorched their hands and
face;

Wider and wider the country grew,
As faster and faster the engine flew.

Louder and louder the thunder crashed,
And brighter and brighter the lightning flashed;
Hotter and hotter the air became,
Till the clothes were burnt from each quivering
frame.

And out of the distance there arose a yell,
"Ha, ha," said the Devil, "we're nearing hell!"
Then, oh, how the passengers shrieked with
pain,
And begged the Devil to stop the train.

But he capered about and danced with glee,
And laughed and joked at their misery.
"My faithful friends, you have done the work,
And the Devil never can a payday shirk.

"You've bullied the weak, you've robbed the poor;
The starving brother you've turned from the door;
You've laid up gold where the canker rust,
And have given free vent to your beastly lust.

"You've justice scorned and corruption sown,
And trampled the laws of nature down;
You have drunk, rioted, cheated, plundered, and
lied,
And mocked at God in your hell-born pride.

"You have paid full fare, so I'll carry you through;
For it's only right you should have your due.
Why, the laborer always expects his hire,
So I'll land you safe in the lake of fire —

"Where your flesh will waste in the flames that roar,
And my imps torment you forever more."
Then the cowboy awoke with an anguished cry,
His clothes wet with sweat and his hair standing high.

Then he prayed as he never had prayed till that
hour
To be saved from his sin and the demon's power.
And his prayers and his vows were not in vain;
For he never rode the hell-bound train.

HIGH-CHIN BOB

By Charles Badger Clark, Jr.

This song was brought to Santa Fe by Henry Herbert Kribbs, who got it from southern Arizona, where it was sung by the cowboys. The song was written by Charles Badger Clark, Jr., and the original version is in his "Sun and Saddle Leather" under the title of "The Glory Trail."

'Way high up in the Mokiones, among the moun-
tain-tops,
A lion cleaned a yearlin's bones and licked his
thankful chops;
When who upon the scene should ride, a-trippin'
down the slope,
But High-Chin Bob of sinful pride and maverick-
hungry rope.

*"Oh, glory be to me!" says he, "an' fame's unfadin'
flowers,
I ride my good top-hoss to-day and I'm top hand
of the Lazy-J,
So Kitty-cat, you're ours!"*

The lion licked his paws so brown and dreamed soft
dreams of veal,
As High-Chin's loop come circlin' down and roped
him round his meal;
He yowled quick fury to the world and all the hills
yelled back:
That top-hoss give a snort and whirled and Bob
caught up the slack.

*"Oh, glory be to me!" says he, "we'll hit the glory
trail.
No man has looped a lion's head and lived to drag
the bugger dead,
Till I shall tell the tale."*

'Way high up in the Mokiones that top-hoss done
his best
'Mid whippin' brush and rattlin' stones from canon-
floor to crest;
Up and down and round and cross Bob pounded
weak and wan,
But pride still glued him to his hoss and glory drove
him on:

*"Oh, glory be to me," says he, "this glory trail is
rough,
I'll keep this dally round the horn until the toot
of judgment morn,
Before I holler 'nough!"*

Three suns had rode their circle home beyond the
desert rim
And turned their star herds loose to roam the
ranges high and dim,
And whenever Bob turned and hoped the limp re-
mains to find,
A red-eyed lion, belly-roped, but healthy, loped
behind!

*"Oh, glory be to me," says Bob, "he kain't be
drug to death!
These heroes that I've read about were only fools
that stuck it out
To the end of mortal breath!"*

'Way high up in the Mokiones, if you ever come
there at night,
You'll hear a ruckus amongst the stones that'll
lift your hair with fright;
You'll see a cow-hoss thunder by and a lion trail
along,
And the rider bold, with chin on high, sings forth
his glory song;

*"Oh, glory be to me!" says he, "and to my mighty
noose!
Oh, pardner, tell my friends below I took a ragin'
dream in tow,
And if I did n't lay him low, — I never turned him
loose!"*

JOHN GARNER'S TRAIL HERD

*Written by one of the waggoners at Fort Worth, Texas,
many years ago. I first heard it sung in the Spearfish
Valley, Dakota.*

Come, all you old-timers, and listen to my song;
I'll make it short as possible and I'll not keep you
long;

I'll relate to you about the time you all remember
well

When we with old Joe Garner drove a beef herd up
the trail.

When we left the ranch it was early in the spring,
We had as good a corporal as ever rope did
swing;

Good hands and good horses, good outfit through
and through, —

We went well equipped, we were a jolly crew.

We had no little herd — two thousand head or
more —

And some as wild brush beeves as you ever saw
before.

We swung to them all the way and sometimes by
the tail, —

Oh, you know we had a circus as we all went up the
trail.

Till we reached the open plains everything went
well,

And then them cattle turned in and dealt us merry
hell.

They stampeded every night that came and did it
without fail, —

Oh, you know we had a circus as we all went up the
trail.

We would round them up at morning and the boss
would make a count,

And say, "Look here, old punchers, we are out
quite an amount;

You must make all losses good and do it without
fail,

Or you'll never get another job driving up the
trail."

When we reached Red River we gave the Inspector
the dodge.

He swore by God Almighty in jail old Joe should
lodge.

We told him if he'd taken our boss and had him
locked in jail,

We would shore get his scalp as we all came down
the trail.

When we reached the Reservation how squirmish
we did feel,

Although we had tried old Garner and knew him
true as steel.

And if we would follow him and do as he said to,
That old bald-headed cow-thief would surely take
us through

When we reached Dodge City we drew our four
months' pay:

Times was better then, boys, than they are to-day.

The way we drank and gambled and threw the girls
around, —

“Say, a crowd of Texas cowboys has come to take
our town.”

The cowboy sees many hardships, although he takes
them well;

The fun we had upon that trip no human tongue
can tell.

The cowboy's life is a dreary life, though his mind
it is no load,

And he always spends his money like he found it
in the road.

If ever you meet old Garner, you must meet him on
the square,

For he is the biggest cow-thief that ever tramped
out there.

But if you want to hear him roar and spin a lively
tale,

Just ask him about the time we all went up the trail.

THE JOLLY COWBOY

*First heard this sung by Dick Wilson, El Paso, Texas.
Author unknown.*

My lover is a cowboy, he's brave and kind and true;
He rides a Spanish pony, he throws a lasso too;
And when he comes to see me our vows we do re-
deem,

He throws his arms around me and thus begins to
sing:

**"Ho, I'm a jolly cowboy, from Texas now I hail;
Give me my quirt and pony, I'm ready for the trail;
I love the rolling prairies, they're free from care
and strife,
Behind a herd of longhorns I'll journey all my life.**

**"When early dawn is breaking and we are far
away,
We fall into our saddles, we round-up all the day;
We rope, we brand, we ear-mark, I tell you we are
smart,
And when the herd is ready for Kansas, then we
start.**

**"Oh, I'm a Texas cowboy, light-hearted, brave, and
free,
To roam the wide, wide prairie, 't is always fun for
me.
My trusty little pony is my companion true,
O'er creek and hills and rivers he's sure to pull me
through.**

**"When threatening clouds do gather and blinding
lightnings flash,
And heavy raindrops splatter and rolling thunders
crash;
What keeps the herd from running stampeding far
and wide?
The cowboy's long, low whistle and singing by their
side.**

**"When in Kansas City our boss he pays us up,
We loaf around the city and take a parting cup**

We bid farewell to the city life, from noisy crowds
we come,
And back to dear old Texas, the cowboy's native
home."

Oh, he is coming back to marry the only girl he
loves;
He says I am his darling, I am his own true love;
Some day we two will marry and then no more he'll
roam,
But settle down with Mary in a cozy little home.

"Ho, I'm a jolly cowboy, from Texas now I hail,
Give me my bond to Mary, I'll quit the Lone Star
trail.
I love the rolling prairies, they're free from care
and strife,
But I'll quit the herd of longhorns for the sake of my
little wife."

THE LAST LONGHORN

*I have been unable to trace the authorship of this song.
Have heard it sung in many places and also recited.*

An ancient long-horned bovine
Lay dying by the river;
There was lack of vegetation
And the cold winds made him shiver;
A cowboy sat beside him,
With sadness in his face,
To see his final passing, —
This last of a noble race.

The ancient eunuch struggled
And raised his shaking head,
Saying, "I care not to linger
When all my friends are dead.
These Jerseys and these Holsteins,
They are no friends of mine;
They belong to the nobility
Who live across the brine.

"Tell the Durhams and the Herefords
When they come a-grazing round,
And see me lying stark and stiff
Upon the frozen ground,
I don't want them to bellow
When they see that I am dead,
For I was born in Texas,
Near the river that is Red.

"Tell the coyotes, when they come at night,
A-hunting for their prey,
They might as well go further,
For they'll find it will not pay:
If they attempt to eat me
They very soon will see
That my bones and hide are petrified, —
They'll find no beef on me.

"I remember in the seventies,
Full many summers past,
There was grass and water plenty,
But it was too good to last.
I little dreamed what would happen
Some twenty summers hence,

When the nester came with his wife, his kids,
His dogs, and his barbed-wire fence."
His voice sank to a murmur,
His breath was short and quick;
The cowboy tried to skin him
When he saw he could n't kick;
He rubbed his knife upon his boot
Until he made it shine,
But he never skinned old longhorn,
'Caze he could n't cut his rine.

And the cowboy riz up sadly
And mounted his cayuse,
Saying, "The time has come when longhorns
And cowboys are no use."
And while gazing sadly backward
Upon the dead bovine
His bronc stepped in a dog-hole
And fell and broke his spine.

The cowboys and the longhorns
Who pardnered in eighty-four
Have gone to their last round-up
Over on the other shore;
They answered well their purpose,
But their glory must fade and go,
Because men say there's better things
In the modern cattle show.

LAS VEGAS REUNION

By N. Howard Thorp

Written for the annual Las Vegas, New Mexico, Reunion.

Come on, all you cow-punchers,
To the round-up in July,
Where the Busters get together,
En the old broncs go sky-high;
We've got 'em spoiled en tricky,
Outlaws from far en near,
En we've got the boys to fork 'em,
Who know not the word of fear.

The cry of all the cowboys now
Is "To the Meadow City or bust!"
From far Colorado's borders
They come a-spurrin' through the dust.
You don't see prairie-schooners
A-headin' now this way,
But 'mobiles come by thousands
To the Reunion's openin' day!

Cow-girls from far Montana
En the little Prairie Rose,
They can ride 'em slick en keerless
Es everybody knows;
So come on to the Meadow City,
The key's thrown plumb away,
En everybody's welcome
To the Cowboy's openin' day!

Chorus

*With angora chaps en carnival hats,
Checked shirts en handkerchiefs loud,
Come straddle yer horse en ride with us,
Come ride with the Wild West crowd!
Fer we're jest cow-eatin' persons,
There's a welcome fer every one;
So whip up yer horse en lope across
To the Cowboys' Re-un-ion!*

"'LIGHT, STRANGER, 'LIGHT"

By N. Howard Thorp

For this is the law of the Western range,
When a stranger hails in sight —
"Jest tie up your hoss in the old corral,
En 'light, stranger, 'light!"

'T is a land of hospitable people,
You're welcome in daytime or night;
Always one more chair at the table,
So it's "'Light, stranger, 'light!"

We don't ask no inquisitive questions,
If your people are native or white;
At our ranch you will find you are welcome,
So it's "'Light, stranger, 'light!"

You may be an outlaw, or preacher,
Got into some place kinda tight —
Some day you'll return the favor,
So it's "'Light, stranger, 'light!"

We are just plain cow-folks in Texas,
But you'll find we are all about right;
You may stay for a year and be welcome,
So it's "'Light, stranger, 'light!'"

LITTLE ADOBE CASA

By Tom Beasley

Written in the spring of 1887 and sung in the cow-camps by the author, who had a good voice. While Beasley was working for me I heard him sing the song. There's a story about a nugget of gold, Henry Heap (the bank watchman in El Paso), and Tom Beasley that some of you old-timers may recall, but I can't write it here. Remember?

Just one year ago to-day,
I left my Eastern home,
Hunting for a fortune and for fame.
Little did I think that now
I'd be in Mexico
In this little adobe casa on the plains.

Chorus

*The roof is ocateo,
The coyotes far and near;
The Greaser roams about the place all day;
Centipedes and tarantulas
Crawl o'er me while I sleep
In my little adobe casa on the plains.*

Alacranies on the ceiling,
Cucarachas on the wall,
My bill-of-fare is always just the same;
Frijoles and tortillas

Stirred up in chile sauce
In my little adobe casa on the plains.

But if some dark-eyed mujer
Would consent to be my wife,
I would try to be contented and remain
'Til fate should show a better place
To settle down for life
Than this little adobe casa on the plains.

THE LITTLE COW-GIRL

By N. Howard Thorp

Daddy come from Brownsville,
En Maw from San Antone;
We come here in a wagon
That ud rock en squeak en groan;

We brought our stock en horses;
The Boys come on afore;
En Dad was playin' all the way
"Old Turkey in the Straw"!

There's me en Sister Annie,
En Tom, en Si, en Budd;
We all was raised with cattle,
So I guess it's in our blood;

En I shore love the dances —
Folks say I take after Maw —
When Dad takes down his fiddle
En plays "Turkey in the Straw"!

We ain't jest much on stylish,
But we got a good Home Ranch,
En the little old horse-pasture
Runs clear down to the branch.

En we're all plumb contented
Since Dad put hinges on the door,
En with his old brown fiddle
Plays "Turkey in the Straw"!

I got er pair er shop-made boots
That Dad had made fer me,
Er pair er silver-mounted spurs
Es pretty es can be;

We ride ter all the dances,
En when I get on the floor,
I'm sure to hear Dad playin'
"Old Turkey in the Straw"!

I've got a young cow-puncher roped,
I've got 'im on my string,
En everything is lovely,
We'll be married in the spring;

Es we ain't much on religion,
We'll be married by the Law,
En I kin hear Dad playin'
"Old Turkey in the Straw"!

LITTLE JOE, THE WRANGLER

By N. Howard Thorp

Written by me on trail of herd of O Cattle from Chimney Lake, New Mexico, to Higgins, Texas, 1898. On trail were the following men, all from Sacramento Mountains, or Crow Flat: Pap Logan, Bill Blevens, Will Brownfield, Will Fenton, Lije Colfelt, Tom Mews, Frank Jones, and myself. It was copyrighted and appeared in my first edition of "Songs of the Cowboys," published in 1908.

Little Joe, the wrangler, will never wrangle more;
His days with the "remuda" — they are done.
'T was a year ago last April he joined the outfit here,
A little "Texas stray" and all alone.

'T was long late in the evening he rode up to the herd
On a little old brown pony he called Chow;
With his brogan shoes and overalls a harder-look-
ing kid,
You never in your life had seen before.

His saddle 't was a Southern kack built many years
ago,
An O.K. spur on one foot idly hung,
While his "hot roll" in a cotton sack was loosely
tied behind
And a canteen from the saddle horn he'd slung.

He said he had to leave his home, his daddy'd
married twice,
And his new ma beat him every day or two;
So he saddled up old Chow one night and "lit a
shuck" this way —
Thought he'd try and paddle now his own canoe.

Said he'd try and do the best he could if we'd only
give him work,
Though he did n't know "straight" up about a
cow;
So the boss he cut him out a mount and kinder put
him on,
For he sorter liked the little stray somehow.

Taught him how to herd the horses and learn to
know them all,
To round 'em up by daylight; if he could
To follow the chuck-wagon and to always hitch the
team
And help the "cosinero" rustle wood.

We'd driven to Red River and the weather had
been fine;
We were camped down on the south side in a bend,
When a norther commenced blowing and we
doubled up our guards,
For it took all hands to hold the cattle then.

Little Joe, the wrangler, was called out with the rest,
And scarcely had the kid got to the herd,
When the cattle they stampeded; like a hailstorm,
long they flew,
And all of us were riding for the lead.

'Tween the streaks of lightning we could see a
horse far out ahead —
'T was little Joe, the wrangler, in the lead;
He was riding "Old Blue Rocket" with his slicker
'bove his head,
Trying to check the leaders in their speed.

At last we got them milling and kinder quieted
down,

And the extra guard back to the camp did go;
But one of them was missin', and we all knew at a
glance

'T was our little Texas stray — poor Wrangler Joe.

Next morning just at sunup we found where Rocket
fell,

Down in a washout twenty feet below;
Beneath his horse, mashed to a pulp, his spurs had
rung the knell

For our little Texas stray — poor Wrangler Joe.

LOVE ON THE RANGE

*I got this from Doc Henderson at an Albuquerque Live
Stock Association meeting.*

Little gal, I'm not a singer; if I were I'd sing to you
A tale of love that sure would be a wonder;
It would beat them opry singers when they sing,

“Love I'll be true —

As true as moon and stars a-shining yonder.”

My hands are big, and clumsy — I can't pick the
light guitar;

And no doubt you'll say my lingo's idle prattle;
But what can you expect? I'm from the Double
Circle-Bar,

Where all my fingers learned was punching cattle.

I know the trail blindfolded and I never knew a fear,
For I've followed it for years, honeysuckle;

I can shoot and throw a rope and brand a crazy,
locoed steer —

I can ride a bucking bronc and make him knuckle.

I can quiet restless cattle when the leader's getting
wild,

And the lightning flash is 'nuff to make you dizzy;

I can soothe 'em like a mother when she's croonin'
to her child —

But it something makes a man get might busy!

But my song — it's meek and humble; there is
nothing I can sing

That in any way my sentiments can utter;

Since I saw your flashing eye, your winning smile

— yes, everything

In your outfit — they have set my heart a-flutter.

So, Chiquita, if you'll let me, I would like to brand
you mine —

Will you share with me the storms and sunny
weather?

Ah! Your arms, your lips, Chiquita — they are
sweeter than old wine!

Come, we'll hit life's trail and follow it — together!

A MAN NAMED HODS

*Heard this first over on the Via Grande, sung by a
puncher named Liston.*

Come, all you old cow-punchers, a story I will tell,

And if you'll all be quiet, I sure will sing it well;

And if you boys don't like it, you can all go to hell.

Back in the day when I was young, I knew a man
named Hods;
He was n't fit fer nothin' cep turnin' up the clods.

But he came West in fifty-three behind a pair of mules
And 't was hard to tell between the three which
was the biggest fools.

Up on the plains old Hods he got — there his
trouble began.
Oh, he sure did get in trouble, — and old Hodsie
was a man.

He met a bunch of Indian bucks led by Geronimo,
And what them Indians did to him — well, shorely
“ I don't know.

But they lifted off old Hodsie's skelp and left him
out to die,
And if it had n't been for me, he'd been in the
sweet by and by.

But I packed him to Santa Fé, and there I found his
mules,
For them dad-blamed two critters had got the In-
dians fooled.

I don't know how they done it, but they shore did
get away,
And them two is livin' up to this very day.

Old Hodsie's feet got toughened up; he got to be
a sport;
He opened up a gamblin' house and a place of low
resort;

He got the prettiest dancing girls that ever could
be found, —

Them girls' feet was like rubber balls, they never
stayed on the ground.

And then thar came Billy the Kid, he envied Hodsie's wealth;

He told old Hods to leave the town, 't would be
better for his health;

Old Hodsie took the hint and got, but he carried
all his wealth.

And he went back to Noo York State with lots of
dinero

And now they say he's senator, but of that I shore
don't know.

THE MULE-SKINNERS

Got this song from John Caldwell, at Lake Valley, New Mexico. He was bronco-buster for S.L.C. outfit.

In readin' the story of early days, it's a cause of
much personal pain

At the way the author-men leave out us in charge
of the wagon train;

Granted the rest of 'em worked and fit in the best
way that they could do —

If it was n't for us that skinned the mules, how
would the bunch have come through?

We have frosted ourselves on the prairie sweeps
a-bringin' the Sioux to book,

And the sojer men never had no kick that the front
rank had been forsook;

They cussed warm holes in the blizzard's teeth
when waitin' fer grub and tents,
But the comforts of home we allus brung though
at times at our expense.

'We have sweated and swore in the desert land
where the white sand glares like snow,
A-rompin' around forty rods from hell playin' tag
with Geronimo;
We larruped the jacks when the bullets flew and
then when 't was gettin' too hot,
We used for our breastworks mules, dead mules,
and we give 'em back shot for shot.

We never was rigged up purty, of course, and we
did n't talk too perlite,
But we brung up the joltin' wagon train to the trail
end of every fight;
We made a trail through the hostile lands and our
whip was the victory's key,
So why in the name of all that's fair can't we figger
in history?

MUSTANG GRAY

*Authorship credited to Tom Grey, Tularosa, New Mexico.
I first heard it sung by a man named Sanford, who kept
a saloon in La Ascension, Mexico, about 1888.*

There was a brave old Texan,
They called him Mustang Gray;
He left his home when but a youth,
Went ranging far away.

But he'll go no more a-ranging,
The savage to affright;
He has heard his last war-whoop,
And fought his last fight.

He ne'er would sleep within a tent,
No comforts would he know;
But like a brave old Tex-i-can,
A-ranging he would go.

When Texas was invaded
By a mighty tyrant foe,
He mounted his noble war-horse,
And a-ranging he did go.

Once he was taken prisoner,
Bound in chains upon the way;
He wore the yoke of bondage
Through the streets of Monterey.

A sefiorita loved him,
And followed by his side;
She opened the gates and gave to him
Her father's steed to ride.

God bless the sefiorita,
The belle of Monterey,
She opened wide the prison door,
And let him ride away.

And when his veteran's life was spent,
It was his last command
To bury him on Texas soil
On the banks of the Rio Grande;

And there the lonely traveler,
When passing by his grave,
Will shed a farewell tear
O'er the bravest of the brave.

And he'll go no more a-ranging,
The savage to affright;
He has heard his last war-whoop,
And fought his last fight.

MY LITTLE BROWN MULE

By N. Howard Thorp

*Written in 1912, at Santa Fe, concerning a pet trick mule
I owned.*

His mammy's a burro, his daddy's a horse;
Of course you'll all think it's a mighty queer cross.
He's got brains in his eyes, he's nary a fool;
As smart as a cricket, my little brown mule.

He's always in mischief, he'll shy at a bug;
When he sees a tin Lizzy he'll jump like a frog;
He's a voice like a trumpet, his coat's always bright;
He's as gentle as can be if the cinch is n't tight.

Just pull on that flank cinch a little too long
And he won't do a thing till you are mounted and on;
Then farewell, relations, good-bye to the crowd,
For you are off on a journey high up in the clouds.

At night I don't stake him, just turn him foot-loose,
And inside of two hours he's as full as a goose;

He's a great old camp-robber when the boys are in
bed —

Roots among the bake ovens for bacon and bread.

He's a great one to wrangle on, he knows every
horse,

And if one of 'em's missing he's as mad as the
boss;

His sense just come natural, he was never in
school,

He's as wise as a parson, my little brown mule.

Did you ask if I'd sell him — well, not on your
life;

The day we were married I gave him to the wife;

And now two of my kids daily ride him to school;

Oh, no, money can't buy him, my little brown
mule.

NEW NATIONAL ANTHEM

*Accredited to Burr Sims. Heard it sung at a matador
camp in the Panhandle of Texas.*

My country, 't is of thee,
Land where things used to be
So cheap we croak.
Land of the mavericks,
Land of the puncher's tricks,
Thy culture-inroad picks
The hide of this peeler-bloke.

Some of the punchers swear
That what they eat and wear

Takes all their calves.
Others vow that they
Eat only once a day
Jerked beef and prairie hay,
Washed down with tallow salves.

These salty dogs but crave,
To pull them out the grave,
Just one Kiowa spur.
They know they still will dine
On flesh and beef the time;
But give us, Lord divine,
One "hen-fruit stir."

Our father's land, with thee,
Best trails of liberty,
We chose to stop.
We don't exactly like
So soon to henceward hike,
But, hell, we'll take the pike
If this don't stop.

NIGGER "'LASSES": THREE-BLOCK BRONCO-BUSTER

By N. Howard Thorp

He ca-su-ied * wid me, most ruinous,
Till ma haid jest popped de ceilin',
Ma stummick got tangled up wid my feet
Till it done lost all feelin';
Ma old black nose commenced ter bleed,

* Ca-su-ied, southern Texas word for bucking.

Everything went round;
When I waked up in a hour er two,
I was spraddled on de ground!

En I was jest a-hummin', —

*Oh, dere ain't no horse what can't be rode,
Dat's what de white folks say!
En dere ain't a man what can't be throwed,
OH, MAH! —*

I finds it jest dat way!

Den dey cotched dat horse too quick to suit,
En brought him back ter me,
En I hobbled my stirrups en wrapped my rowels,
En I hollered, "Turn him free!"
Den he bent en he twisted, en he bowed en he
moaned,
En done der grand grape-vine;
I waked up a-straddle of er cactus bush,
But dis song I had in mind, —

*Oh, dere ain't no horse what can't be rode,
Dat's what de white folks say!
En dere ain't a man what can't be throwed,
OH, MAH! —*

I finds it jest dat way!

Den I grabs dat bronc en I piles aboard,
Says I, "Ole horse, good-bye!
I'se got yo' number sure dis time,
I doan care what yer try!"
Bout den he gimme de ole sun-fish,
Rail-fence, en do-se-do;
En it broke my heart fer us ter part,
But I had ter let him go —

*Oh, dere ain't no horse what can't be rode,
Dat's what de white folks say!
En dere ain't a man what can't be throwed,
OH, MAH! —*

I finds it jest dat way!

NIGHT-HERDING SONG

This is part of an old song, slightly changed. I lost the other verses when one of my ranch buildings burned down at Palma, New Mexico, some years ago.

Oh, slow up, dogies, quit your roving round,
You have wandered and tramped all over the ground;
Oh, graze along, dogies, and feed kinda slow,
And don't forever be on the go, —
Oh, move slow, dogies, move slow.

I have circle-herded, trail-herded, night-herded,
and cross-herded, too,
But to keep you together that's what I can't do;
My horse is leg-weary and I'm awful tired,
But if you get away I'm sure to get fired, —
Bunch up, little dogies, bunch up.

Oh, say, little dogies, when are you goin' to lay down
And quit this forever siftin' around?
My limbs are weary, my seat is sore;
Oh, lay down, dogies, like you've laid before, —
Lay down, little dogies, lay down.

Oh, lay still, dogies, since you have laid down,
Stretch away out on the big open ground;
Snore loud, little dogies, and drown the wild sound
That will all go away when the day rolls round, —
Lay still, little dogies, lay still.

THE OLD CHISHOLM TRAIL

The origin of this song is unknown. There are several thousand verses to it — the more whiskey the more verses. Every puncher knows a few more verses. Sung from the Canadian line to Mexico.

Come along, boys, and listen to my tale,
I'll tell you of my trouble on the old Chisholm Trail.

*Coma ti yi youpy, youpy ya, youpy ya,
Coma ti yi youpy, youpy ya.*

I started up the trail October twenty-third,
I started up the trail with the 2-U herd.

Oh, a ten-dollar hoss and a forty-dollar saddle, —
And I'm goin' to punchin' Texas cattle.

I woke up one mornin' afore daylight,
And afore I sleep the moon shines bright.

Old Ben Bolt was a blamed good boss,
But he'd go to see the girls on a sore-backed hoss.

Old Ben Bolt was a fine old man,
And you'd know there was whiskey wherever he'd
land.

My hoss throwed me off at the creek called Mud,
My hoss throwed me off round the 2-U herd.

Last time I saw him he was goin' cross the level
A-kickin' up his heels and a-runnin' like the devil.

It's cloudy in the west, a-lookin' like rain,
And my damned old slicker's in the wagon again.

Crippled my hoss, I don't know how,
Ropin' at the horns of a 2-U cow.

We hit Caldwell and we hit her on the fly,
We bedded down the cattle on the hill close by.

No chaps, no slicker, and it's pourin' down rain,
And I swear, by God, I'll never night-herd again.

Feet in the stirrups and seat in the saddle,
I hung and rattled with them longhorn cattle.

Last night I was on guard and the leader broke the
ranks,
I hit my horse down the shoulders and I spurred
him in the flanks.

The wind commenced to blow and the rain began to
fall,
Hit looked, by grab, like we was goin' to lose 'em
all.

I jumped in the saddle and grabbed holt the horn,
Best blamed cow-puncher ever was born.

I popped my foot in the stirrup and gave a little yell,
The tail cattle broke and the leaders went to hell.

I don't give a damn if they never do stop;
I'll ride as long as an eight-day clock.

1

Foot in the stirrup and hand on the horn,
Best damned cowboy ever was born.

I herded and hollered and I done very well,
Till the boss said, "Boys, just let 'em go to hell."

Stray in the herd, and the boss said kill it,
So I shot him in the rump with the handle of the
skillet.

We rounded 'em up and put 'em on the cars,
And that was the last of the old Two Bars.

Oh, it's bacon and beans 'most every day, —
I'd as soon be eatin' prairie hay.

I'm on my horse and I'm goin' at a run,
I'm the quickest shootin' cowboy that ever pulled
a gun.

I went to the wagon to get my roll,
To come back to Texas, dad-burn my soul.

I went to the boss to draw my roll,
He had it figgered out I was nine dollars in the hole.

I'll sell my outfit just as soon as I can,
I won't punch cattle for no damned man.

Goin' back to town to draw my money,
Goin' back home to see my honey.

With my knees in the saddle and my seat in the sky,
I'll quit punchin' cows in the sweet by and by.

*Coma ti yi youpy, youpy ya, youpy ya,
Coma ti yi youpy, youpy ya.*

THE OLD COWMAN

By Scott Levitt, Great Falls, Montana

*Got song from Joel Thomas, but at the time I did not
know author's name.*

When the sap comes up through the cottonwood
roots,

And the first birds light 'mongst the quaking asp
shoots;

When the last brown edge at the sprinkling snow

Shows a crocus bloom and the cattle low

To the smell of spring from the greening buttes;

Then my winter of years feels a pulsing flood

And a discontent is let loose in my blood;

For the past comes up like a mist-robed sun,

And the sap of old longings begins to run

Till a thousand wishes burst into bud!

From out the past rides a care-free crew,

Steady and reckless right wild, but true —

Big Sag Bill and old Milk River Blake,

Musselshell Jack and Pecos Jake,

A-riding ahead of 'em two by two!

Now the coyotes call to the round-up camp,

And the night herd's out where the grass grows
damp;

The herders are singing a soothing tune,

For the cows are restless beneath the moon,

And I hear 'em bawling and hear 'em stamp!

And, oh, what singing from out the night!

Not the voice nor the tune, but a something quite

Filled with trust; and the milling cows
Forget stampeding and start to browse,
For the voice of the herder has set them right.
Give me one more day of the old free land,
Uncursed by a road or a barbed-wire strand;
A horse to ride and the sight, as I pass
Of a thousand horns rising out of the grass,
And I'll push back my chair and lay down my
hand!

Let me ride, old-timer, ride into the west,
Till I'm lost in the sunset upon the crest —
And with it draw down to whatever lies
On the range that's hid till we top the rise;
Where the round-up boss has staked out what's
best.

Old Milk River Blake and Big Sag Bill,
And Jack and Jake, at the top o' the hill,
Are waiting to ride like we used to ride
At the round-up camp down the Great Divide,
Till the boss of all herders sings, "Peace, be still."

OL' DYNAMITE

By Phil Le Noir

The outlaw stands with blindfold eyes,
His feet set wide apart;
His coal-black hide gleams in the sun —
Thar 's killin' in his heart.

A puncher squats upon his heels,
His saddle at his side;
He's sizin' up Ol' Dynamite,
That he is booked to ride.

The cowboy rises, lifts his saddle —
A little tune he's hummin' —
Walks catlike all around the hoss —
"Hold him, boys, I'm comin'."

Now up above the outlaw's back
He lifts the load of leather;
Then care-ful-lee he lets it down,
Like the droppin' of a feather.

Ol' Dynamite he stands stock-still,
Plumb like a gentled pony.
A leap, a yell! an' Buck's all set —
"On with the cer-e-mo-nee."

The snubbers rip the blindfold off,
The punchers yip and yell;
Ol' Dynamite gives one grand snort,
Then starts his little hell.

He plunges forward on his feet,
His hind heels in the air;
Then up and down he bucks and backs
Like a loco rockin'-chair.

But now he stops — he spins around —
He bawls, he bites, he kicks!
He r'ars straight up into the air,
Then down on two steel sticks.

But look! "My Gawd!" The crowd screams out,
"He's boltin' for the stand!"
Then just as quick he jerks up short —
An' thar's Buck a-stickin' grand.

Buck leaps to earth, lifts his hat,
Bows to the whirl of cheers —
Then turning slides his saddle off,
An' quickly disappears.

OLD GRAZIN' BEN

By N. Howard Thorp

In seventy-six, or thereabouts, when the Black Hills
made the strike,
En new camps sprung up like mushrooms in the
cañons overnight,
'T was the twenty-mule team that made the trip
from the Hills to Camp Supply,
Or the big ox team with their flanks drawn lean
When the water-holes went dry.

Yer could see 'em for miles a-comin',
As the alkali dust would rise,
Each skinner a handkerchief around his head
Ter kind 'er protect his eyes.
With a "Get up! Tobe, blank, blank, you buck,
I'll skin yer alive, yer dub!"
They'd sweat and strain 'gainst collar and chain
Through 'dobe, sand, and mud.

These were the teams that kept at work
The men who were diggin' the gold,
Workin' at rocker and riffle
In those placer camps of old;
These were the men who made history,
The men who supplied the fuel;
Their bones lie scattered along the trail
Side by side with the ox and the mule.

Bull-whackers, en skimmers, en swampers,
The men who handled the teams,
Bringing provisions over the plain,
It 's befitting to me, it seems,
That their deeds should be ever remembered
'Mongst the best of the frontiersmen;
So three cheers for one I remember well,
Three cheers for Old Grazin' Ben.

OLD HANK

By N. Howard Thorp

Driftin' along the rim-rock, old Camp-Robber
and I,
Out on a scoutin' trip, circlin' the flat lands
dry,
Cuttin' the sign of the cattle, watchin' which way
they drift,
Pullin' 'em out of the bog-holes, givin' the weak
ones a lift,
Throwin' 'em back on the Home Range, each day
in a different place,
In slickers en leggins of leather, through sand-
storms that blister your face . . .

Boss in the Ranch House rides easy — *his* days of
worry are gone,
For he made his pile in the old Trail days, the days
of the old longhorn.
Yep, I'm only a worn-out old Puncher — though
the Boss thinks a *heap* of me!
For I was with him on the Pecos, in the Raid of
Seventy-Three! . . .

Then he married, en got him religion, en tells how
 you must n't do wrong,
 How a Brand is the cowman's protection — then
 he'll deal you a Gospel Song!

But I'll tell you, Old Hank was the slickest, that
 ever laid line on a steer,
 Or burnt over a brand with a runnin'-iron, or worked
 on an old cow's ear!
 'Course, friends, all this talk 's confidential, — I
 would n't want Old Hank to see
 That I have n't changed *my* damned religion, since
 the Trail Herd of Seventy-Three!

"OLD NORTH"

By N. Howard Thorp

When the Mormons drifted southward,
 He was one of a ten-span team,
 The biggest young ox them Utah
 Bull-whackers hed ever seen.

Tawny en bony en holler,
 At three years full six feet tall,
 En he'd break the chain whenever he'd
 strain
 En a heavy wagon stall.

Out of a team of twenty,
 Which died in the White Sands Pass.
 He alone pulled through en made his way
 To the springs of San Nicolas.

Twenty Mormon women,
In all, fifty Mormon souls,
Died from the lack of water,
Paying the desert toll.

The ranchmen, on learning the story,
How every one had died,
Let the big steer have his freedom
Through the Organ Valley wide.

In the winter he'd drift down southward
To the Franklin Mountains warm,
In the summer you'd find him grazin'
On the top of El Torro's horn.

No one ever molests him,
A monument he stands
To those pioneers in search of homes,
That gallant Mormon band.

This was the story as told me
By a ranchman's little lass,
Of "North," the steer who roams the plains,
And of those in the White Sands Pass.

OLD PAINT

*Heard this sung by a puncher who had been on a spree
in Pecos City. He had taken a job temporarily as sheep-
rustler for an outfit in Independence Draw, down the river,
and was ashamed of the job. I won't mention his name.*

Refrain:

*Good-bye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne,
Good-bye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.*

My foot in the stirrup, my pony won't stand;
Good-bye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne, I'm off for Montan';
Good-bye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

I'm a-ridin' Old Paint, I'm a-leadin' Old Fan;
Good-bye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

With my feet in the stirrups, my bridle in my hand;
Good-bye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

Old Paint's a good pony, he paces when he can;
Good-bye, little Annie, I'm off for Cheyenne.

Oh hitch up your horses and feed 'em some hay,
And seat yourself by me so long as you stay.

My horses ain't hungry, they'll not eat your hay;
My wagon is loaded and rolling away.

My foot in my stirrup, my reins in my hand;
Good-morning, young lady, my horses won't stand.

Good-bye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne,
Good-bye, Old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

OLD PAINT

By N. Howard Thorp

Every time I see an old paint horse, I think of you,
Old paint horse of mine that used to be,
Old pal o' mine that was, the best horse of all,
because —
That's why, old horse, at last I set you free!

I've bought 'em by the thousand, I've owned 'em
everywhere —

There's one stands out among 'em all alone;
Paint-marked everywhere, tail a little short o'
hair,

Old horse, you never failed to bring me home!

'Member when they stole you from Pass City,
En locked you up inside the Juarez jail?
Said that you had eaten up an entire crop of wheat,
En I had to rustle round en get your bail?

En I got you cross the river en matched you in a
race,

En we bet the last red dollar we could scrape? —
En how you bit old Rocking Chair, the horse you
run against,

En made him turn his head en lose the race?

We was both young en foolish in them green days
long ago,

I don't believe in telling stories out of school! —

'Member when we roped the pianner en jerked her
out the door?

Hush up! Old Paint! you're talkin' like a fool!

Well, old horse, you're buried, en your troubles,
they are done,

But I often sit en think of what we did,

En recall the many scrapes we had, en used to think
it fun,

Es we rode along the Rio Grande . . .

Good-bye, old Kid!

OLD-TIME COWBOY

Understand this was written by an old cow-puncher who claims he was dragging his rope along and some one else's calf got tangled up in it, and he landed in the Huntsville Pen. His name was Rogers. I first heard it sung by Tom Beasley, at Hueco Tanks, Texas.

Come, all you melancholy folks, wherever you maybe,
I'll sing you about the cowboy whose life is light
and free;

He roams about the prairie, and at night when he
lies down,

His heart is as gay as the flowers in May in his bed
upon the ground.

They're a little bit rough, I must confess, the most
of them at least;

But if you do not hunt a quarrel, you can live with
them in peace;

For if you do, you're sure to rue the day you joined
their band.

They will follow you up and shoot it out with you,
just man to man.

Did you ever go to a cowboy whenever hungry and dry,
Asking for a dollar and have him you deny?

He'll just pull out his pocket-book and hand you
a note, —

They are the fellows to help you whenever you are
broke.

Go to their ranches and stay a while — they never
ask a cent;

And when they go to town their money is freely spent.

They walk straight up and take a drink, paying for
every one,
And they never ask your pardon for anything they've
done.

When they go to their dances, some dance while
others pat;
They ride their bucking broncos and wear their
broad-brimmed hats;
With their California saddles and their pants stuck
in their boots,
You can hear their spurs a-jingling and perhaps
some of them shoots.

Come, all soft-hearted tenderfeet, if you want to
have some fun,
Go live among the cowboys, they'll show you how
it's done;
They'll treat you like a prince, my boys, about them
there's nothing mean;
But don't try to give them too much advice, for all
of them ain't green.

"OLD TROUBLE" A L RANCH COLORED COOK

By N. Howard Thorp

Morn's breakin' over de ole Ranch before de moon's
gone way,
Dat's a sign er early frostin' in de fall;
Two Roosters on de water-trough 'fore de break er
day, —
Dat's gwine ter make some trouble fer us all.

I see de fethers in ole turkey's tail, all turned en
pointin' west,
En I see a crippled dog down in de lane;
De sittin' hens 'bout twelve o'clock has all done
quit de nests, —
Dey's gwine ter be some trouble soon again.

De bees is buzzin' awful loud down in de gums ter-
day;
Dat ole houn' dog ain't never moved sense noon;
Believe me, Marster Robert, de signs es pointin'
right,
Dat der's gwine ter be some trouble mighty soon.

I see dat front door open when der warn't no one
about,
Der smoke blow back from de chimbley in de room,
En I sees dat rockin'-chair commence ter rock
alone —
Yes, dere's gwine ter be some trouble mighty soon.

ON THE DODGE

By N. Howard Thorp

Well, old horse, you've brought me 'cross the line,
There's a sheriff's posse ridin' close behind,
But they'll not cross the Boca Grande,
The Ru-ra-les are too handy,
And here's one Gringo that they'll never find.

Chorus

*I don't see why they can't leave me alone,
I'd love to be back in my happy home!*

*Every time I steal a horse,
Some one raises hell, of course,
Seems I'm always driftin' west from San Antone!*

Last week I found a stake-pin I had lost,
Jest an iron one — 'bout a dollar it had cost, —
On it was tied a rope,
En it almost got my goat,
When I found the other end tied to a horse!

I'm as innocent as any man can be,
But I'm afraid the Judge will not agree,
As there is n't any use
In dishin' up a poor excuse,
I might as well jest saddle up and flee!

THE OVERLAND STAGE

By N. Howard Thorp

They don't drive the Overland Stage no more
Like they used to when I was young,
With four half-broke broncs out in the lead,
En two in the wagon tongue.
With old Dick Huber up on the box,
The messenger by his side,
They'd drive like hell when they heard the yell
Of Apaches on the ride.


The thorough-braces swinging to and fro,
Es we'd hit the chuck-holes deep,
The clatter of chains 'gainst single trees
On the down grade rough and steep;

Es we'd take the hill across the draw,
You'd hear the buckskin pop —
And Huber pullin' on the lines
Es the team would near the top.

What to do in the case of a hold-up
Was all the talk one day.
Jim Black said he'd fork over,
If let go on his way;
Tom Moore 'lowed he'd come a-shootin'
If they tried that game on him,
For he'd been held up once before
On the road to Silver Inn.

The woman passenger we'd picked up,
In the valley at early dawn
Had never moved or spoke a word
Till we'd passed through Hollow Horn.
En I could see quite quick en pronto
That she was bridle-wise;
Though made up of smiles and dimples,
She had the Devil in her eyes.

For her shawl was worn Spanish-wise,
En her eyes alone shone bright,
En seemed to notice yer every move
Es they'd shift from left to right.
En her little slim girlish figure
Seemed pitifully alone,
En made one feel you should always protect
The young away from home.



'Bout then the coach give an awful lurch,
Es we struck the river sand,
When I come to, there stood the girl
With a Winchester in her hand;
"You gents pile out, yer hands hold high!"
Was the order that she gave,
"Just one false play er a crooked move,
En you'll fill an early grave!"

Well, she cleaned us out to the last red cent,
En the messenger, too, er course,
En she made old Huber cut loose the team
En saddle her up a horse.
Es she rode away, we heard her say,
In a voice with a musical note,
"Boys, times have changed on the open range,
Since the women have got the vote!"

THE PECOS RIVER QUEEN

By N. Howard Thorp

*Written on Lower Pecos, New Mexico, June, 1901, after
Roy Bean had told me of this fact concerning Patty.
Copyrighted in my book published in 1908.*

Where the Pecos River winds and turns in its jour-
ney to the sea,
From its white walls of sand and rock striving ever
to be free,
Near the highest railroad bridge that all these mod-
ern times have seen
Dwells fair young Patty Moorhead, the Pecos River
Queen.

She's known by all the cowboys on the Pecos River
wide;
They know full well that she can shoot, that she can
rope and ride;
She goes to every round-up, every cow-work with-
out fail,
Looking out for all her cattle branded "walking
hog on rail."

She made her start in cattle, yes, made it with her
rope;
Can tie down e'ry maverick 'fore it can strike a
lope;
She can rope and tie and brand it as quick as any
man;
She's voted by all cowboys an A1 top cow-hand.

Across the Comstock railroad bridge, the highest in
the West,
Patty rode her horse one day a lover's heart to
test;
For he told her he would gladly risk all dangers
for her sake,
But the puncher would n't follow, so she's still
without a mate.

PECOS TOM

By N. Howard Thorp

Where the old Fort Sumner Barracks look down on
the Pecos wide,
In a dugout near the crossin' we was a-sittin' side
by side;

Old Pecos Tom, the cowman, en your humble
servant, me,
Was a-swappin' cow-camp stories in the fall of
eighty-three.
When my gaze it sort er fastened on a gun slung on
his side,
Worth some fifteen thousand dollars — say, maybe
you think I've lied?
But the handle was plumb covered with diamonds
of all size,
En she'd glitter, en she'd glisten, es she hung down
from his side.

You could have bought his whole darned outfit fer
a yearlin' steer er two,
Hat, boots, overalls, en chaps — there was nothin'
that was new;
Lived down in a dugout, on jest sour-dough bread
en beef,
En was just about as happy es a Choctaw Indian chief.

Figured he had ten thousand cattle, en the whole
wide range was his,
En if he wanted a good six-shooter it was no one
else's biz;
So when he shipped with er train er steers to Chi-
cago late one fall,
En was strollin' on up State Street, he thought he'd
make a call

On the biggest jewelry outfit that kept gaudy
things to wear,
But when he asked for a six-shooter the Jew clerk
began to stare;

"Yes, we've got one that was ordered for a bloomin'
English lord,
But I reckon from your outfit it's a gun you can't
afford.

"It will cost you fifteen thousand —" Says Old Tom,
"Just give her here,
You counter-jumpin' gorriff!" — en he grabbed
him by the ear,
En he peeled off fifteen thousand to the Hebrew
standin' there,
Sayin', "Don't judge Western cowmen by the out-
fits that they wear!"

A PRAIRIE SONG

*I heard this sung by a cow-girl at Cheyenne Round-up —
a Miss Windsor.*

Oh, music springs under the galloping hoofs,
Out on the plains;
Where mile after mile drops behind with a smile,
And to-morrow seems always to tempt and be-
guile, —
Out on the plains.

Oh, where are the traces of yesterday's ride?
There to the north;
Where alfalfa and sage sigh themselves into
sleep,
Where the buttes loom up suddenly, startling and
steep, —
There to the north.

Oh, rest not my pony, there's youth in my heart,
 Out on the plains;
And the wind sings a wild song to rob me of care,
And there's room here to live and to love and to
 dare, —
 Out on the plains.

THE PROSPECTOR

By N. Howard Thorp

*Written at the Slash S W Ranch, on the door of the old
ranch house, in the San Andreas Mountains.*

Twelve years have I lived in this desolate place,
Far from all habitation — not even a face
Have I seen, save Apaches, those unwelcome guests,
Pass me by as I work with my pick in the breast.

Am I one of the millions whose brain-string has
 snapped,
Who sees visions of gold in those canyons un-
 mapped,
Unexplored, unprospected, that lay just ahead,
Near the Arc of the Bow where so many lie dead?

Like all miners I've visions, which may some day
 come true,
Of where I would go and what I would do —
If I'd but once find the vein which carries the ore,
My days of hard work would forever be o'er.

There's a frenzy of fury that boils in one's veins —
Will it pay for the hardships, will it pay for my pains?
'T is a distorted finger that beckons, it seems,
To the land of illusions, the place of my dreams.

PUNCHIN' DOUGH

By Henry Herbert Knibbs

Come, all you young waddies, I'll sing you a song:
Stand back from the wagon — stay where you be-
long;

I've heard you observin' I'm fussy and slow,
While you're punchin' cattle and I'm punchin'
dough.

Now I reckon your stomach would grow to your back,
If it wa'n't for the cook that keeps fillin' the slack:
With the beans in the box and the pork in the tub,
I'm a wonderin', now, who would fill you with
grub?

You think you're right handy with gun and with
rope,
But I've noticed you're bashful when usin' the soap:
When you're rollin' your Bull for your brown
cigarette,
I been rollin' dough for the biscuits you et.

When you're cuttin' stock, then I'm cuttin' steak:
When you're wranglin' horses, I'm wranglin' cake:
When you're hazin' the dogies and battin' your
eyes,
I'm hazin' dried apples that aim to be pies.

You brag about shootin' up windows and lights,
But try shooting biscuits for twelve appetites:
When you crawl from your roll and the ground it is
froze,
Then who biles the coffee that thaws out your nose?

In the old days the punchers took just what they
got:

It was sowbelly, beans, and the old coffee-pot;
But now you come howlin' for pie and for cake,
Then you cuss at the cook for a good bellyache.

You say that I'm old, with my feet on the skids;
Well, I'm tellin' you now that you're nothin' but
kids:

If you reckon your mounts are some snaky and
raw,
Just try ridin' herd on a stove that won't draw.

When you look at my apron, you're readin' my
brand,
Four X, which is sign for the best in the land;
On bottle or sack it sure stands for good luck,
So — line up, you waddies, and wrangle your chuck.

No use of your snortin' and fightin' your head:
If you like it with chile, just eat what I said;
For I aim to be boss of this end of the show,
While you're punchin' cattle and I'm punchin'
dough.

THE RAILROAD CORRAL

*Author unknown. Mailed to me by a friend at Colorado
City, Texas.*

Oh, we're up in the morning ere breaking of the
day,
The chuck-wagon's busy, the flapjacks in play;

The herd is astir o'er hillside and vale,
With the night riders rounding them into the trail.
Oh, come take up your cinches, come shake out
your reins;
Come wake your old bronco and break for the
plains;
Come roust out your steers from the long chaparral,
For the outfit is off to the railroad corral.

The sun circles upward; the steers as they plod
Are pounding to powder the hot prairie sod;
And it seems, as the dust makes you dizzy and sick,
That we'll never reach noon and the cool shady
creek. -

But tie up your kerchief and ply up your nag;
Come dry up your grumbles and try not to lag;
Come with your steers from the long chaparral,
For we're far on the road to the railroad corral.

The afternoon shadows are starting to lean,
When the chuck-wagon sticks in the marshy ravine;
The herd scatters farther than vision can look,
For you can bet all true punchers will help out the
cook.

Come shake out your rawhide and snake it up fair;
Come break your old bronco to take in his share;
Come from your steers in the long chaparral,
For 't is all in the drive to the railroad corral.

But the longest of days must reach evening at last,
The hills all climbed, the creeks all past;
The tired herd droops in the yellowing light;
Let them loaf if they will, for the railroad's in sight.

So flap up your holster and snap up your belt,
And strap up your saddle whose lap you have felt;
Good-bye to the steers from long chaparral,
For there's a town that's a trunk by the railroad
corral.

THE RAMBLING COWBOY

*Author supposed to have been K. Tolliver. I first heard
it at Van Horn, Texas.*

There was a rich old rancher who lived in the coun-
try by;
He had a lovely daughter on whom I cast my eye;
She was pretty, tall, and handsome, both neat and
very fair;
There's no other girl in the country with her I
could compare.

I asked her if she would be willing for me to cross
the plains;
She said she would be truthful until I returned
again;
She said she would be faithful until death did prove
unkind,
So we kissed, shook hands, and parted, and I left
my girl behind.

I left the state of Texas, for Arizona I was bound;
I landed in Tombstone City, I viewed the place all
round.
Money and work were plentiful, and the cowboys
they were kind,
But the only thought of my heart was the girl I left
behind.

One day, as I was riding across the public square,
The mail-coach came in and I met the driver there;
He handed me a letter which gave me to understand
That the girl I left in Texas had married another
man.

I turned myself all roundabout, not knowing what
to do,
But I read on down some further and it proved the
words were true.
Hard work I have laid over, it's gambling I have
designed.
I'll ramble this wide world over for the girl I left
behind.

Come, all you reckless and rambling boys, who
have listened to this song,
If it has n't done you any good, it has n't done you
any wrong;
But when you court a pretty girl, just marry her
while you can,
For if you go across the plains she'll marry another
man.

SAM BASS

By John Denton, Gainsville, Texas, 1879

This is the most authentic report on authorship I have received. I first heard the song sung in Sidney, Nebraska, at a dance hall, in 1888.

Sam Bass was born in Indiana, it was his native
home,
And at the age of seventeen young Sam began to
roam.

Sam first came out to Texas a cowboy for to be, —
A kinder-hearted fellow you seldom ever see.

Sam used to deal in race-stock, one called the
Denton mare;
He matched her in scrub races and took her to the
fair.
Sam used to coin the money, and spent it just as
free;
He always drank good whiskey wherever he might
be.

Sam left the Collins ranch, in the merry month of
May,
With a herd of Texas cattle the Black Hills for to
see;
Sold out in Custer City, and then got on a spree, —
A harder set of cowboys you seldom ever see.

On their way back to Texas they robbed the U.P.
train,
And then split up in couples and started out again;
Joe Collins and his partner were overtaken soon,
With all their hard-earned money they had to meet
their doom.

Sam made it back to Texas, all right up with care;
Rode into town of Denton with all his friends to
share.
Sam's life was short in Texas; three robberies did
he do;
He robbed all the passenger mail and express cars
too.

Sam had four companions — four bold and daring
lads —

They were Richardson, Jackson, Joe Collins, and
Old Dad;

Four more bold and daring cowboys the Rangers
never knew,

They whipped the Texas Rangers and ran the boys
in blue.

Sam and another companion, called Arkansas for
short,

Was shot by a Texas Ranger by the name of
Thomas Floyd;

Oh, Tom is a big six-footer and thinks he's mighty
fly,

But I can tell you his racket, — he's a deadbeat on
the sly.

Jim Murphy was arrested and then released on bail;
He jumped his bond at Tyler and then took the
train for Terrell;

But Mayor Jones had posted Jim and that was all a
stall,

'T was only a plan to capture Sam before the coming
fall.

Sam met his fate at Round Rock, July the twenty-
first;

They pierced poor Sam with rifle balls and emptied
out his purse.

Poor Sam he is a corpse and six foot under clay,
And Jackson in the bushes trying to get away.

Jim had borrowed Sam's good gold and did n't want
to pay,

The only shot he saw was to give poor Sam away.
He sold out Sam and Barnes and left their friends
to mourn, —

Oh, what a scorching Jim will get when Gabriel
blows his horn.

And so he sold out Sam and Barnes and left their
friends to mourn, —

Oh, what a scorching Jim will get when Gabriel
blows his horn.

Perhaps he's got to heaven, there's none of us can
say,

But if I am right in my surmise he's gone the other
way.

SKY-HIGH

By N. Howard Thorp

The scream of the outlaw split the air
As we tied him hard and fast
To the snubbing-post in the horse corral,
For his turn had come at last

To learn the feel of spurs of steel
As they graze along each side, —
En Bugger pulled up his chaps a hole,
For he was the next to ride.

We knew he'd strike, we knew he'd bite,
We knew he'd kick and rear,
So we grabbed his ears en held his head,
Till Bugger got up near.

He stepped into the saddle
 En hollered — "Let 'im go!"
 We jerked the blinder from his eyes,
 Then stopped to watch the show.

You've all heard of pitchin' horses
 From Steamboat down the line,
 Old Barometer, en Step Fast,
 En a mare they called Divine.

Old Prickly Pear, en Pizen,
 Lop Ears, en Stingaree, —
 They all wuz Shetland ponies
 'Side this horse from Santa Fe.

We asked Red in tones solicitous
 If he had made his will,
 Had he any girl in Texas
 Who really loved him still?

Was there any parting message
 That he would like to send,
 To some one in his old, old home
 Who still might be his friend?

Who was his pet undertaker?
 What parson should we get?
 Would he have flowers on his coffin? —
 I can hear old Bugger yet;

"Mosey, you four-flush punchers,
 Don't weep no tears for me,
 I'm a ridin' kid from Texas,
 From the old 3 Bar C!

"Go up, you old Cloud-Getter,
I can see the Pearly Gate,
We're a-doin' the Grand Ascension,
Loopin' the loops, as sure as fate;

"If I'm a judge of horses,
You're not one, two, three,
With the gentle stock we used to ride
At the old 3-C!"

He whipped old Sky-High till he quit,
He roweled him up and down;
Old Sky-High had a plenty,
He could hardly turn around.

En we heard old Bugger hummin',
Es he turned the outlaw free,
"I'm a ridin' kid from Texas,
From the old 3-C!"

A SONG OF THE RANGE

By James Barton Adams

Sent me by Miss Nell Benson

The bawl of a steer to a cowboy's ear is music of
sweetest strain,
And the yelling notes of the gray coyotes to him are
a glad refrain;
The rapid beat of his bronco's feet on the sod as he
speeds along
Keeps 'livening time to the ringing rhyme of his
rollicking cowboy song.

His eyes are bright and his heart is light as the
smoke of his cigarette,
There's never a care for his soul to bear, no
troubles to make him fret;
For a kingly crown in the noisy town his saddle he
would not change —
No life so free as the life we see 'way out on the
cattle range.

Hi-lo! Hi-lay!
To the range away,
On the deck of a bronc of steel,
With a careless flirt
Of a rawhide quirt
And a dig of the roweled heel.
The winds may howl,
And the thunder growl,
Or the breeze may softly moan;
The rider's life
Is the life for me,
The saddle a kingly throne.

At the long day's close he his bronco throws with
the bunch in the hoss corral,
And a light he spies in the bright blue eyes of his
welcoming rancher gal;
'T is a light that tells of the love that dwells in the
soul of his little dear,
And a kiss he slips to her waiting lips when no one
is watching near.
His glad thoughts stray to the coming day when
away to the town they'll ride,
And the nuptial brand by the parson's hand will be
placed on his bonnie bride,

And they'll gallop back to the old home shack in the
life that is new and strange —
The rider bold and the girl of gold, the queen of the
cattle range.

Hi-lo! Hi-lay!
For the work is play
When love's in the cowboy's eyes,
When his heart is light
As the clouds of white
That swim in the summer skies;
And his jolly song
Speeds the hours along
As he thinks of the little gal
With the golden hair
Who'll be waiting there
At the gate of the home corral.

SPECKLES

By N. Howard Thorp

This song was written in 1906 at Palma, New Mexico, my old ranch. I gave the contract to print my first little book, entitled "Songs of the Cowboys," to Mr. P. A. Speckman, News Print Shop, Estancia, New Mexico, who printed it in 1908.

He was little en peaked en thin, en narry a no-
account horse —
Least that's the way you'd describe him in case
that the beast had been lost —
But for single and double cussedness en double
center-fired sin
The horse never come out o' Texas that was half-
way knee-high to him.

The first time that ever I saw him was nineteen
year ago last spring.

'T was the year we had grasshoppers, that come en
et up everything,

That a feller rode up here one evening en wanted to
pen overnight

A small bunch of horses, he said, en I told him I
guessed 't was all right.

Well, the feller was busted, the horses was thin,
en the grass around here kind o' good,

En he said if I'd let him hold here a few days, he'd
settle with me when he could.

So I told him all right, turn them loose down the
draw, that the latchstring was always un-
tied;

He was welcome to stop a few days if he liked en
rest from his long, weary ride.

Well, the cuss stay'd around for two or three weeks
till at last he decided to go,

And that horse over yonder being too poor to move
he gimme — the cuss had no dough;

Well, at first the darn brute was as wild as a deer,
en would snort when he came to the branch,

En it took two cow-punchers, on good horses, too,
to handle him here at the ranch.

Well, winter come on and the range it got hard, and
my mustang commenced to get thin,

So I fed him along and rode him around some and
found out old Speckles was game;

For that was what the other cuss called him, just
Speckles, no more or no less:

His color, could n't describe it, something like a
paint-shop in distress.

Them was Indian times, young feller, that I'm
a-telling about,
And oft's the time I've seen the red men fight and
put the boys in blue to rout.
A good horse in them days, young feller, would
often save your life —
One that in any race could hold the pace when the
red-skin bands were rife.

I was a-settin' one night at sunset, jest inside that
hall,
En Mollie hed gone to the milk-pen as she heard
the milk cows bawl,
When out o' brush en thicket, ridin' towards me
out o' the west,
Comes Antelope John, his horse on the run, en
ridin' like one possessed.

"Apaches are out!" he shouted; "for God's sake,
hurry and go!
They're close behind, comin' like the wind; catch
your horse and come on, Joe!"
Old Speckles was saddled, I grabbed my gun,
picked Mollie up as I passed;
With the grit of her kind she hung on behind and
never a question asked.

Down through cañons deep, over mesas steep, Old
Speckles never failed;
In his heart of steel he seemed to feel the red-skins
on our trail;

TEN THOUSAND TEXAS RANGERS 145

On, ever onward, towards Fort Craig he sped the
whole night through;
Though handicapped by a double load, he out-
stripped the red-skins too.

Never will I forget that ride, en how at first day-
break
We galloped out of the chaparral en entered the old
fort gate.

TEN THOUSAND TEXAS RANGERS

By Alice Corbin

*Written in March, 1917, at the time when Germany pro-
posed to Mexico that they retake the "lost provinces" of
Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.*

Ten thousand Texas Rangers are laughin' fit to
kill

At the joke of the German Kaiser, an' his fierce,
imperious will —

For he sez, sez he, to the Mexican boob, hidin'
behind his beard,

"Old Uncle Sam is an easy mark, or so I've always
heerd —

"Go up and take his cattle, and take a state or
two, —

Texas, New Mexico, Arizone — don't stop before
you're through;

For we shall make war together, and together make
peace," he said,

Now ain't it a joke — so easy-like — as easy as
makin' bread!

Now if he had wanted a gun-man, he could n't
have chose a worse,
For Pancho Villa has got more knack in fixin' a man
for the hearse,
And if he had thought that a gun-man could swipe
that piece of earth,
He should 'a' remembered *we* got the trick of
handlin' a gun from birth!

Ten thousand Texas Rangers are shakin' with
wicked glee
At the joke of the German Kaiser in his fierce perplexity;
They are bustin' their buttins with laughin', they
are laughin' fit to kill —
"By Gawd," sez they, "but that's one on him, by
Gawd, but that's one on Bill!"

THE TENDERFOOT

By Yank Hitson, Denver, Colorado, 1889

*I got the song from old Battle Axe, whom lots of old
punchers remember, at Phoenix, Arizona, 1899.*

I thought one spring, just for fun,
I'd see how cow-punching was done;
And when the round-ups had begun
I tackled the cattle-king.
Says he, "My foreman is in town,
He's at the plaza, his name is Brown;
If you'll see him he'll take you down."
Says I, "That's just the thing."

We started for the ranch next day;
Brown augured me most all the way.
He said that cow-punching was child play,
That it was no work at all, —
That all you had to do was ride,
'T was only drifting with the tide;
Oh, how that old cow-puncher lied —
He certainly had his gall.

He put me in charge of a cavyard,
And told me not to work too hard,
That all I had to do was guard
The horses from getting away;
I had one hundred and sixty head,
I sometimes wished that I was dead;
When one got away, Brown's head turned red,
And there was hell to pay.

Straight to the bushes they would take,
As if they were running for a stake, —
I've often wished their neck they'd break,
But they would never fall.
Sometimes I could not head them at all,
Sometimes my horse would catch a fall,
And I'd shoot on like a cannon ball
Till the earth came in my way.

They saddled me up an old gray hack
With two set-fasts on his back;
They padded him down with a gunny sack
And used my bedding all.
When I got on he quit the ground,
Went up in the air and turned around,
And I came down and hit the ground, —
It was an awful fall.

They picked me up and carried me in
And rubbed me down with an old stake-pin.
"That's the way they all begin;
You're doing well," says Brown.
"And in the morning, if you don't die,
I'll give you another horse to try."
"Oh, say, can't I walk?" says I.
Says he, "Yes — back to town."

I've traveled up and I've traveled down,
I've traveled this country round and round,
I've lived in city and I've lived in town,
But I've got this much to say:
Before you try cow-punching, kiss your wife,
Take a heavy insurance on your life,
Then cut your throat with a barlow knife, —
For it's easier done that way.

THE TEXAS COWBOY

*An old song, credited to Al Pease of Round Rock, Texas.
I first heard it sung by J. Latham at La Luz, New Mexico.*

Oh, I am a Texas cowboy,
Far away from home;
If ever I get back to Texas
I never more will roam.

Montana is too cold for me
And the winters are too long;
Before the round-ups do begin,
Our money is all gone.

Take this old hen-skin bedding,
Too thin to keep me warm;
I nearly freeze to death, my boys,
Whenever there's a storm.

And take this old "tarpoleon"
Too thin to shield my frame —
I got it down in New Mexico
A-dealin' a Monte game.

Now to win these fancy leggins
I'll have enough to do;
They cost me twenty dollars
The day that they were new.

I have an outfit on the Musselshell,
But that I'll never see,
Unless I get sent to represent
The circle or D.T.

I've worked up in Nebraska
Where the grass grows ten feet high,
And the cattle are such rustlers
That they seldom ever die;

I've worked up in the sand hills,
And down upon the Platte,
Where the cowboys are good fellows
And the cattle always fat;

I've traveled lots of country, —
Nebraska's hills of sand,
Down through the Indian Nation,
And up the Rio Grande; —

But the Bad lands of Montana
Are the worst I've ever seen,
The cowboys are all tenderfeet,
And the dogies are all lean.

If you want to see some bad lands,
Go over on the Dry;
You will bog down in the coulees
Where the mountains reach the sky.

A tenderfoot to lead you
Who never knows the way;
You are playing in the best of luck
If you eat more than once a day.

Your grub is bread and bacon,
And coffee black as ink;
The water so full of alkali
It is hardly fit to drink.

They will wake you in the morning,
Before the break of day,
And send you on a circle
A hundred miles away.

All along the Yellowstone
'T is cold the year around;
You will surely get consumption
By sleeping on the ground.

Work in Montana
Is six months in the year;¹
When all your bills are settled,
There is nothing left for beer.

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Work down in Texas
Is all the year around;
You will never get consumption
By sleeping on the ground.

Come, all you Texas cowboys,
And warning take from me,
And do not go to Montana
To spend your money free.

But stay at home in Texas,
Where work lasts the year around;
And you will never catch consumption
By sleeping on the ground.

THANKSGIVING ON THE RANCH

By James Barton Adams, Denver

We was settin' 'round the ranch house on the last
Thanksgivin' Day,
Tellin' yarns an' swappin' fables fer to pass the
time away;
Fer the owner was religious an' had made it mani-
fest
That there would n't be no ridin' on a day o' joyful
rest;
An' we got in a discussion an' a heap o' talk was
spent
Pro an' con an' vivy vocy what Thanksgivin' reely
meant;
An' I'll bet a workin' saddle 'gainst a pa'r o' hoss's
shoes
That there never was another sich a scatterin' o'
views.

Texas Tony thought 't was taught him when he
went to Sunday school,
In the days when he was swimmin' in the Baptis'
pious pool,
That it was a celebration that was started on the
dock
When the Scribes an' Pharisees was landed onto
Plymouth Rock.
Bronco Billy said he reckoned Tex had got his
stories mixed,
That his mem'ry wheels had run too long without
a-bein' fixed;
That the day, if he remembered, was a day o'
jubilee
In remembrance of Abe Lincoln settin' all the nig-
gers free.

Brocky Jim, from Arizony, begged to differ, sayin'
he
In his younger days had wasted lots o' time on his-
tory;
An' the day was celebrated in thanksgivin' fer
the change
When the Revolution fellers drifted off King
George's range.
Lengthy Jones an' Watt McGovern an' the Rio
Grandy Kid
Coincided in believin', as the present writer
did,
It was jest a yearly epock to remind us o' the
day
When Columbus happened on us in a onexpected
way.

Uncle Dick, the ol' hoss 'rangler, sot an' smoked
his pipe till all
O' the fellers with the question then at stake had
tuk a fall,
An' when asked fer his opinion o' the matter said
that he
Had his idee o' the object o' the yearly jubilee:
'T was a day when all the fellers so inclined could
show their thanks
Fer whatever they'd a mind to by a-fillin' up their
tanks
Till their legs got weak an' weary from a-carryin'
the load —
He had spent the day in Denver an' he reckoned
that he knowed.

THREE-BLOCK TOM

By N. Howard Thorp

We was trailin' some stolen cattle
In the winter of '98,
From the Sierra Capitanes
Past Dry Red Lake.

On north to the Gran Quivira,
Past the Malapais,
Hugging their trail like leeches
Rode Three-Block Tom and I.

They passed Punta de Agua,
Left Manzanas on the west,
Estancia to the eastward —
They hardly stopped to rest.

Here en there we found a calf
That had played out en dropped behind —
They were making thirty miles a day,
Driving like the wind.

We caught up with them at Cerillos,
On the T.P. Road;
Driv' 'em plain out of the country,
Expecting there to load.

But somehow the rustlers got wind of us,
En quit the cattle there,
En though we hunted for several days
We could n't find the pair.

At last we got instructions
From the supreme boss,
To ship to Kansas City
To Clay, Robinson & Ross.

But when I commenced a-loadin',
I found Tom was n't there;
A puncher told me he was in Lamy,
Loaded up fer fair.

So I hired the two-horse wagon
En set out that night —
When I found Old Tom in Lamy,
He was sure some sight.

He had centipedes and rattlers,
Gila monsters by the score,
Puttin' them through their paces
On Jon Pflueger's barroom floor.

Well, at last I got him headed
Fer the loadin' pens,
En right there, friend neighbors,
When my trouble it began.

For he would n't make a wiggle
Till I'd bought a few drinks more;
With his jug hugged up tight in his arms
I got him out the door.

That puncher knew more history
Of the insect race from A to Z
Than any Boston high-brow
Who held an L.F.D.

So discoursin' on their merits
En to give him time to think,
He'd come out with a suggestion
That all hands take a drink.

Besides the three cars loaded,
We had 'bout a half-car more,
So I dumped Tom among the cattle
En shut the stock-car door.

So him on the jug of whiskey
Pulled out on the branch;
I never thought no more about him
Till I got back to the ranch.

Old Andy showed me a telegram
From the firm in K.C. —
The cattle had arrived all safely,
As fine as they could be;

Included in the shipment
Was a cowboy called Tom L. —
Said he was a fightin' cow-puncher,
En his middle name was Hell;

He wanted a return ticket
Back on the line,
Or he'd lick the whole Block outfit,
One at a time!

TOP HAND

From Jim Brownfield, Crow Flat, New Mexico, winter of 1899. Authorship credited to Frank Rooney; written about 1877. This song has been expurgated by me, as all the old-timers know that as originally sung around the cow-camps it could not have been printed, as it would have burned up the paper on which it was written. Jim, do you remember how you had to force those fresh eggs down and the jug said, "Goo-Goo"? I published this song under the title of "Top Hand" in my earlier edition. The old name, which all cow-punchers remember, did not sound good in print.

While you're all so frisky, I'll sing a little song:
Think a horn of whiskey will help the thing along,
It's all about the Top Hand when he's busted flat,
Bumming round town, in his Mexicana hat.
He'd laid up all winter and his pocket-book is flat.
His clothes are all tatters, but he don't mind that.

See him in town with a crowd that he knows
Rolling cigarettes an' a-smoking through his nose.
First thing he tells you, he owns a certain brand,
Leads you to think he is a daisy hand.

Next thing he tells you 'bout his trip up the
trail,
All the way up to Kansas to finish up his tale.

Put him on a horse, he's a dandy hand to work;
Put him in the branding-pen, he's dead sure to
shirk.

With natural-leaf tobacco in the pockets of his
vest

He'll tell you his Californy pants are the best.
He's handled lots of cattle, has n't any fears,
Can draw his sixty dollars, for the balance of his
years.

Put him on herd, he's a-cussin' all day;
Anything tries, it's sure to get away.
When you have round-up he tells it all about
He's going to do the cuttin' and you can't keep
him out.

If anything goes wrong he lays it on the screws,
Says the lazy devils were trying to take a snooze.

When he meets a greener he ain't afraid to rig,
Stands him on a chuck-box and makes him dance
a jig,

Waives a loaded cutter, makes him sing and
shout,
He's a regular Ben Thompson, when the boss ain't
about.

When the boss ain't about he leaves his leggins in
camp,

He swears a man who wears them is worse than a
tramp.

Says he's not caring for wages that he earns,
For dad's rich in Texas 'n' got wagonloads to
burn;
But when he goes to town he's sure to take
it in;
He's always been dreaded wherever he has been.
He rides a fancy horse, he is a favorite man,
Can get more credit than a common waddie can.


When you ship the cattle he's bound to go along
To keep the boss from drinking and to see that
nothing 's wrong;
Wherever he goes, catch on to his game,
He likes to be called with a handle to his name;
He's always primping with a pocket looking-glass;
From the top to the bottom he's a holy jackass.

THE U S U RANGE

*Received this song from Clabe Merchant, Black River,
New Mexico.*

Come, cowboys, and listen to my song;
I'm in hopes I'll please you and not keep you long;
I'll sing you of things you may think strange
About West Texas and the U S U range.

You may go to Stamford and there see a man
Who wears a white shirt and is asking for hands;
You may ask him for work and he'll answer you
short;
He will hurry you up, for he wants you to start.
He will put you in a wagon and be off in the rain,
You will go upon Tongue River on the U S U range.



You will drive up to the ranch and there you will
stop;

It's a little sod house with dirt all on top.

You will ask what it is and they will tell you out
plain

That it is the ranch house on the U S U range.

You will go in the house and he will begin to ex-
plain;

You will see some blankets rolled up on the floor;

You may ask what it is and they will tell you out
plain

That it is the bedding on the U S U range.

You are up in the morning at the daybreak

To eat cold beef and U S U steak,

And out to your work no matter if it's rain —

And that is the life on the U S U range.

You work hard all day and come in at night,

And turn your horse loose, for they say it's all right,

And set down to supper and begin to complain

Of the chuck that you eat on the U S U range.

The grub that you get is beans and cold rice

And U S U steak cooked up very nice;

And if you don't like that, you need n't complain,

For that's what you get on the U S U range.

Now, kind friends, I must leave you, I no longer
can remain,

I hope I have pleased you and given you no pain

But when I am gone don't think me strange,

For I have been a cow-puncher on the U S U.

WESTERN LIFE

Appeared in "Denver Republican." Accredited to Bronco Sue, who I was told wrote it.

I buckled on a brace of guns and sallied to Wyoming,
And thought I'd kill some Indians ere day had
reached the gloaming;
But the first red-skin that came to view upon the
reservation
Said: "Ah, my dear old college chum, I give you
salutation!"

For Western life ain't wild and woolly now;
They are up on Wagner, Ibsen,
And adore the girls of Gibson —
For Western life ain't wild and woolly now!

I struck a little prairie town and saw two cowboys
greet,
And thought: "Now there'll be powder burnt when
these two bad men meet";
But the first one says to Number Two: "You beat
me, Dick, at tennis:
Now come along, old chap, and read the finish of
'Pendennis.'"

For Western life ain't wild and woolly now;
The cowboy knows a lot besides more cow;
He can two-step, do hemstitching,
And do hay or baseball pitching —
For Western life ain't wild and woolly now!

So in despair I turned into a busy Western town,
And hoped to see the gun-fighters a-mowing of men
 down;
But while I loitered on the street to see blood by
 the flagon,
I fell before a green-goods man and then a devil
 wagon.

For Western life ain't wild and woolly now;
There is no daily gunpowder powwow;
There are bunco games galore
And the chauffeur holds the floor —
But Western life ain't wild and woolly now!

WESTWARD HO!

*Heard a horse-wrangler named Singleton sing this on the
Delaware, at point of the Guadalupe Mountains.*

I love not Colorado
Where the faro table grows,
And down the desperado
The rippling Bourbon flows;

Nor seek I fair Montana
Of bowie-lunging fame;
The pistol ring of fair Wyoming
I leave to nobler game.

Sweet poker haunted Kansas
In vain allures the eye;
The Nevada rough has charms enough,
Yet its blandishments I fly.

Shall Arizona woo me
Where the meek Apache hides?
Or New Mexico where natives grow
With arrow-proof insides?

Nay, 'tis where the grizzlies wander
And the lonely diggers roam,
And the grim Chinese from the squatter flees,
That I'll make my humble home.

I'll chase the wild tarantula
And the fierce coyote I'll dare,
And the locust grim, I'll battle him,
In his native wildwood lair.

Or I'll seek the gulch deserted,
And dream of the wild red man,
And I'll build a cot on a corner lot
And get rich as soon as I can.

WHAT'S BECOME OF THE PUNCHERS?

By N. Howard Thorp

What's become of the punchers
We rode with long ago?
The hundreds and hundreds of cowboys
We all of us used to know?

Sure, some were killed by lightning,
Some when the cattle run,
Others were killed by horses,
And some with the old six-gun.

Those that worked on the round-up,
Those of the branding-pen,
Those who went out on the long trail drive
And never returned again.

We know of some who have prospered,
We hear of some who are broke,
My old pardner made millions in Tampa,
While I've got my saddle in soak!

Sleeping and working together,
Eatin' old "Cussie's good chuck,"
Riding in all kinds of weather,
Playing in all kinds of luck;

Bragging about our top-hosses,
Each puncher ready to bet
His horse could outrun the boss's,
Or any old horse you could get!

Scott lies in Tularosa,
Elmer Price lies near Santa Fe,
While Randolph sits here by the fireside
With a "flat-face" on his knee.

'Gene Rhodes is among the high-brows,
A-writin' up the West,
But I know a lot of doin's
That he never has confessed!

He used to ride 'em keerless
In the good old days
When we both worked together
In the San Andres!

Building big loops we called "blockers,"
Spinning the rope in the air,
Never a cent in our pockets,
But what did a cow-puncher care?

I'm tired of riding this trail, boys,
Dead tired of riding alone —
B'lieve I'll head old Button for Texas,
Towards my old Palo Pinto home!

WHEN BOB GOT THROWN

*Author unknown. Heard it sung in Arizona at Hachita
by a puncher named Livingston.*

That time when Bob got throwed
I thought I sure would bust;
I liked to died a-laffin'
To see him chewing dust.

He crawled on that pinto brone
And hit him with a quirt,
The next thing that he knew
He was wallerin' in the dirt.

Yes, it might 'a' killed him,
I heard the hard ground pop,
But to see if he was injured
You bet I didn't stop.

I jest rolled on the ground
And began to kick and yell;
It liked to tickled me to death
To see how hard he fell.

'T war n't more than a week ago
That I myself got throwed;
But that was from a meaner horse
Than old Bob ever rode.

D' you reckon Bob looked sad and said
"I hope that you ain't hurt"?
Naw; he just laughed and laughed
To see me chewin' dirt.

I've been prayin' ever since
For his horse to turn his pack,
And when he done it I'd 'a' laughed
If it had broke his back.

So I was still a-howlin'
When Bob he got up lame;
He seen his horse had run clear off,
And so for me he came.

He first chucked sand into my eyes,
With a rock he rubbed my head,
Then he twisted both my arms:
"Now, go fetch that hoss," he said.

So I went and fetched him back,
But I was feelin' good all day;
For I sure enough do love to see
A fellow get throwed that way.

WHOSE OLD COW?

By N. Howard Thorp

Written at Roswell, New Mexico, 1899. Add was one of the best cow-hands on Pecos River. Everybody knew him. When he got married each cow-man wanted to give him a present, no one knowing what the other man had sent him, "as ranches were far apart." He received nineteen stoves and ranges for wedding presents. This song was in my copyrighted book published in 1908.

'T was the end of the round-up the last day of
June,
Or maybe July, I don't just remember,
Or it might have been August, 't was sometime
ago,
Or perhaps 't was the first of September.

Anyhow, 't was the round-up we had at Mayou,
On the lightning rod's range near Cayo;
There was some twenty wagons "more or less"
camped about
On the temporal in the cañon.

First night we'd no cattle, so we only stood guard
On the horses, somewhere about two hundred head;
So we side-lined and hopped, we belled and we
staked,
Loosed our hot rolls and fell into bed.

Next morning 'bout daybreak we started our work;
Our horses, like possums, felt fine,
Each one "tendin' kitten," none trying to shirk,
So the round-up got on in good time.

Well, we worked for a week till the country was
clear

An' the boss said, "Now boys we'll stay here;
We'll carve and we'll trim 'em an' start out a
herd

Up the east trail from old Abilene."

Next morning all on herd an' but two with the cut,
An' the boss on Piute carving fine,
'Til he rode down his horse and had to pull out,
An' a new man went in to clean up.

Well, after each outfit had worked on the band
There was only three head of them left,
When Nig Add from the L F D outfit rode in,
A dictionary on earmarks an' brands.

He cut the two head out where they belonged,
But when the last cow stood there alone,
Add's eyes bulged so he didn't know just what to
say,
'Ceptin' "Boss, dere's sumpin' here monstrous
wrong!

"White folks smarter 'n Add, an' maybe I'se wrong'
But here 's six months' wages dar I'll give
If any one 'll tell me when I reads de mark
To who dis long-horned cow belongs.

"Left ear swaller fork an' de undercrop,
Overslope in right ear an' de underbit,
Hole punched in center, an' de jinglebob
Under half crop, an' de slash an' split.

"She's got O Block an' Lightnin' Rod,
Nine Forty-Six an' A Bar Eleven,
Rafter Cross an' de double prod,
Terrapin an' Ninety-Seven;

"Half Circle A an' Diamond D,
Four-Cross L an' Three P Z;
B W I, Bar X V V,
Bar N Cross an' A L C.

"So, if none o' you punchers claims dis cow,
Mr. Stock 'Sociation need n't get 'larmed,
So old nigger Add, just brand her now,
For one more brand or less won't do no harm."

WINDY BILL

*Sung first to me by John Collier, Cornudas Mountain,
New Mexico, July, 1899. Appeared first in my previous
copyrighted book.*

Windy Bill was a Texas man,
And he could rope, you bet;
Talk of the steer he could n't tie down
Had n't sorter been born yet;
The boys they knew of an old black steer,
A sort of an old outlaw,
Who ran down in the bottom
Just at the foot of the draw.

This slim black steer had stood his ground
With punchers from everywhere;
The boys they bet Bill two to one
He could n't quite get there.

So Bill brought up his old cow-horse —
His wethers and back were sore —
Prepared to tackle this old black steer
Who ran down in the draw.

With his grazin' bits and sand-stacked tree,
His chaps and taps to boot,
His old maguey tied hard and fast,
Went out to tackle the brute.
Bill sorter sauntered around him first;
The steer began to paw,
Poked up his tail high in the air,
And lit down in the draw.

The old cow-horse flew at him
Like he 'd been eatin' corn,
And Bill he landed his old maguey
Around old blackie's horns.
The old-time horse he stopped dead-still;
The cinches broke like straw;
Both the sand-stacked tree and old maguey,
Went driftin' down the draw.

Bill landed in a big rock-pile;
His hands and face were scratched;
He 'lowed he always could tie a steer
But guessed he 'd found his match.
Paid up his bet like a little man,
Without a bit of jaw,
And said old blackie was the boss
Of all down in the draw.

There's a moral to my song, boys,
Which I hope you can see;

Whenever you start to tackle a steer
Never tie hard your maguey.
Put on your dalebueeltas,
'Cordin' to California law,
And you will never see your old rim-fires
Driftin' down the draw.

WOMEN OUTLAWS

By N. Howard Thorp

There's a touch of human pathos,
A glamour of the West,
Round the names of women outlaws
Who have now gone to their rest —

Bronco Sue, Belle Star, and Shudders,
Pike Kate, and Altar Doane,
Calamity Jane, Sister Cummings,
And the Rose of Cimmaron.

You've all oft heard the saying,
"I'd go to Hell for you!"
About these women outlaws
That saying was too true.

Each left her home and dear one
For the man she loved the best,
Close by his side on many a wild ride
Through the mountains of the West.

They've played their parts in Western Drama,
On the great unscreened Western stage,
Where the mountains were their platform,
Their stage-setting rocks and sage.

Hunted by many a posse,
Always on the run,
Every man's hand against them,
They fought, and often won.

With a price upon each head,
They'd have to fight and stand,
And die as game as any man
With a gun in either hand.

My hat off to you, women outlaws,
For you did what you thought best,
And the same wild blood that coursed your veins
Has settled up the West.

Whether right or wrong, your spirit
Knew not the word of fear —
And 't is the dauntless courage of your kind
That bred the pioneer!

THE ZEBRA DUN

First heard the song sung by Randolph Reynolds, Carizozo Flats, in 1890.

We were camped on the plains at the head of
the Cimarron
When along came a stranger and stopped to arger
some.
He looked so very foolish that we began to look
around,
We thought he was a greenhorn that had just
'scaped from town.

We asked if he'd had been to breakfast; he had n't
had a smear;

So we opened up the chuck-box and bade him have
his share.

He took a cup of coffee and some biscuits and some
beans,

And then began to talk and tell about foreign kings
and queens, —

About the Spanish War and fighting on the seas
With guns as big as steers and ramrods big as
trees, —

And about old Paul Jones, a mean-fighting son of a
gun,

Who was the grittiest cuss that ever pulled a gun.

Such an educated feller, his thoughts just came in
herds,

He astonished all them cowboys with them jaw-
breaking words.

He just kept on talking till he made the boys all sick,
And they began to look around just how to play
a trick.

He said he had lost his job upon the Santa Fe
And was going across the plains to strike the 7-D.
He did n't say how come it, some trouble with the
boss,

But said he'd like to borrow a nice fat saddle hoss.

This tickled all the boys to death; they laughed 'way
down in their sleeves, —

"We will lend you a horse just as fresh and fat as
you please."



Shorty grabbed a lariat and roped the Zebra Dun
And turned him over to the stranger and waited
for the fun.

Old Dunny was a rocky outlaw that had grown so
awful wild
That he could paw the white out of the moon
every jump for a mile.
Old Dunny stood right still—as if he didn't
know —
Until he was saddled and ready for to go.

When the stranger hit the saddle, Old Dunny quit
the earth,
And traveled right straight up for all that he was
worth.
A-pitching and a-squealing, a-having wall-eyed
fits,
His hind feet perpendicular, his front ones in the
bits.

We could see the tops of the mountains under
Dunny every jump,
But the stranger he was growed there just like
the camel's hump;
The stranger sat upon him and curled his black
mustache,
Just like a summer boarder waiting for his hash.

He thumped him in the shoulders and spurred
him when he whirled,
To show them flunky punchers that he was the wolf
of the world.

When the stranger had dismounted once more upon
the ground,
We knew he was a thoroughbred and not a gent
from town;

The boss, who was standing round watching of the
show,
Walked right up to the stranger and told him he
need n't go, —
"If you can use the lasso like you rode old Zebra
Dun,
You are the man I've been looking for ever since
the year one."

Oh, he could twirl the lariat, and he didn't do it
slow;
He could catch them fore feet nine out of ten for
any kind of dough.
There's one thing and a shore thing I've learned
since I've been born,
That every educated feller ain't a plumb greenhorn.

GLOSSARY



GLOSSARY

Baquero (vaquero)	A cowpuncher
Blocker	A large loop made with a rope
Bronco	An untamed horse
Broom'y, broom tails	Range mares
Buckaroo	A cowpuncher
Caballada	A bunch of horses
Cabresto	A rope
Chaps, chaparreras	Leather leggings
Cincha	A girth for saddle
Corral	A pen or enclosure
Crinolina	Hoop-skirt. An expression used to describe spinning a rope
Cuarta	A whip
Dale vuelta	Used in giving turns of rope around saddle horn
Freno	A bridle
Grazin bits	A snaffle or easy curb
Jáquima	A halter
Kack	A saddle
Lasso	A loop, or to catch
Latigo	A strap from cinch to saddle
Maguey	A Mexican catch rope
Manada	A bunch of mares
Maverick	An unbranded animal
Mestefio	A wild horse
Montura	A saddle
Morral	A feed bag
Mustang	A wild horse
Outlaw	A horse which has been spoiled in breaking

Reata	A rope
Remuda	A bunch of saddle horses or relay of horses
Rodéo	A round-up
Slick	An unbranded calf
Taps, tapaderas	Stirrup coverings
Tarp	A canvas bed sheet
Vaquero	A cowpuncher
Waddle	A cowpuncher
Willows	Range mares
Wrangler	A man who looks after and outfits saddle horses

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